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**THE  
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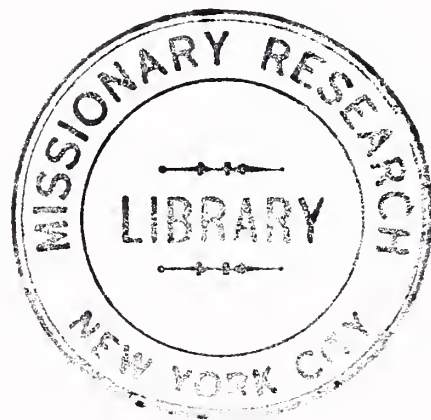
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*We have made such a league with the Highest  
of all Potentates, that we are wholly ensured  
that we and all those who firmly rely upon it,  
will find ultimate freedom through His mighty  
and powerful Hand.*

WILLIAM THE SILENT



JAN 7 1948





H. M. QUEEN WILHELMINA

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# INTRODUCTION

by DR. H. J. VAN MOOK  
Minister for Overseas Territories

TWO groups of three small islands each, in nearly opposite corners of the Caribbean, and a tract of rough hills, jungle, swamp, and tidal rivers on a rather isolated part of the South American coast between the Orinoco and the Amazon; could they offer enough substance and variety to fill a book? There are several reasons why the answer must be in the affirmative.

History once saw, on those tiny islands, the centers of a flourishing somewhat illicit trade. They were the narrow gateways through the wall of colonial monopoly, surrounding the vast acquisitions of Spain, Britain and France, when those walls began to crumble in the second half of the 18th Century. The high adventure of naval war, of captured galleons, of smuggling and buccaneering has touched their harbors time and again. And the coastal plains of Guiana nurtured the beginning of modern tropical agriculture long before the better endowed but more distant and less accessible parts of Asia, Africa and South America shouldered them out of the European market.

Among the colorful variety of races and civilizations which filled the islands and coasts of the American Mediterranean, the few hundred thousands of inhabitants in Curaçao and Surinam developed and maintained a distinct and attractive character. Or rather several characters, although the imprint of Dutch influence is common to them all. In Curaçao a cosmopolitan and worldwide community thrives and trades in an Eighteenth Century Dutch Nutshell; in Aruba a pastoral people of distinctly Indian descent is changing into an industrial population of a relatively advanced type and training; Bonaire, Saint Eustatius, Saba, and Saint Martin each have their own characteristics, both in the racial composition of their inhabitants, and in their means of subsistence, ranging from simple agriculture and cattle-breeding to an almost general following of the sea in Saba.

In Surinam a medley of people originating from the four quarters of the globe is gradually being



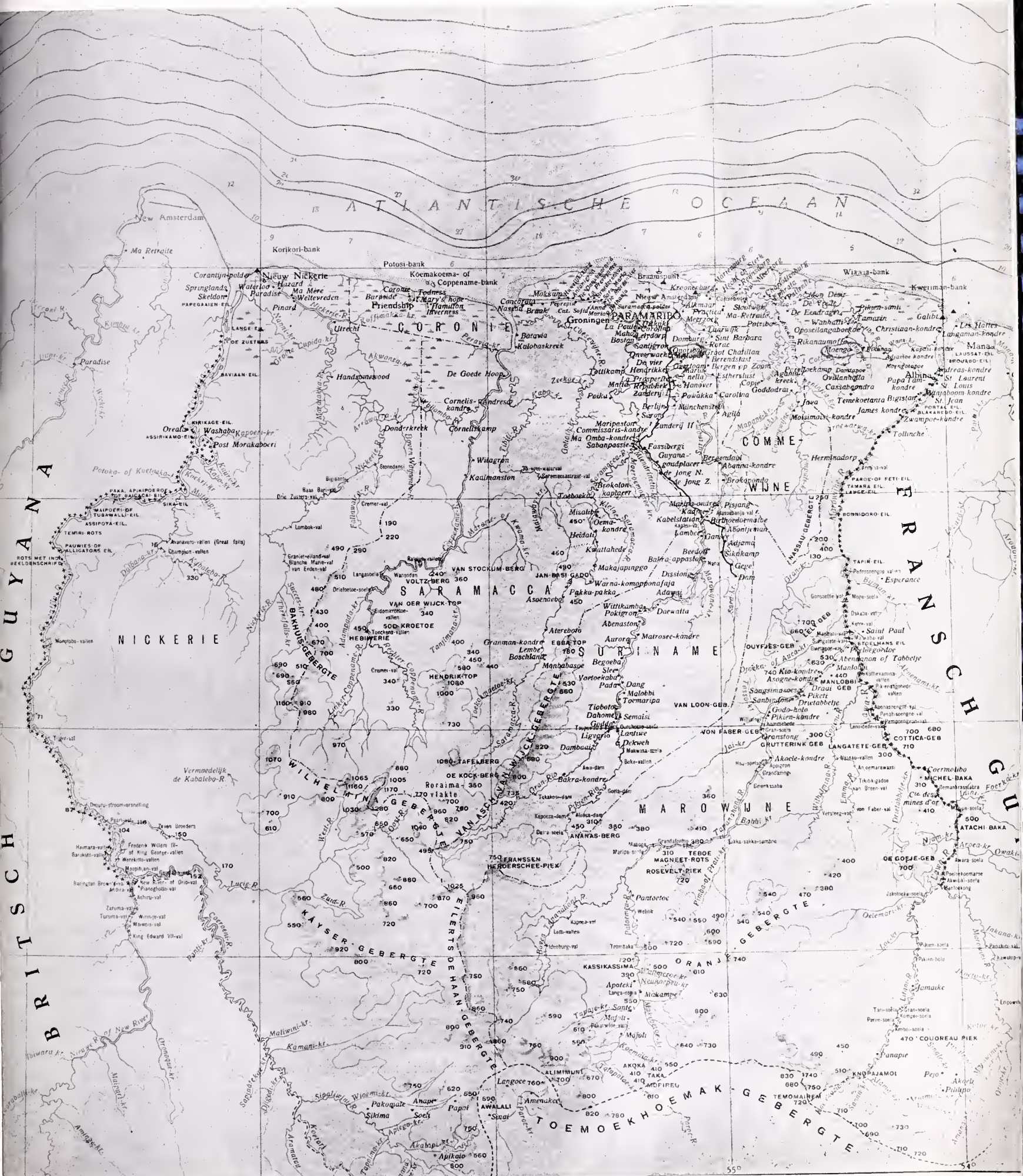
DR. H. J. VAN MOOK

merged into one Dutch speaking and freedom-loving unit. All the main races and religions of humanity are represented in Paramaribo and on the farms and plantations, which have been wrested from the ever-invading forest. But the thoughts and aspirations of these men and women are intensely occupied with their new homeland, and very gradually communal barriers, which might seem insurmountable elsewhere, are being lowered and demolished.

The war has touched these countries and turned the spotlight on them more than once. Oil refineries and bauxite mines are working night and day for the Allied cause. The submarine has turned these peaceful spots into armed camps, where Americans and Dutchmen work together with the local militia to chase the Axis pirates from the seas and keep the Axis gangsters from the shore. The impulse towards self-government acquired a new inspiration from the fact that, having remained free from invasion, these territories had to rely more on their own resources than before; but at the same time their feeling of solidarity with the parts of the kingdom, temporarily overrun by the enemies of mankind, was activated by the urge to succor and by a compassionate humanity.



# SURINAM SECTION







Miami Daily News—George Goodwin

PROF. DR. J. C. KIELSTRA

# FOREWORD

by PROFESSOR DR. J. C. KIELSTRA  
Governor of Surinam

PRIOR to the World War, Surinam occupied a special, peculiar position within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

For many years, notwithstanding the new bauxite enterprises, it was of little importance for the prosperity of the Kingdom. Since slavery was abolished at about the same time as in the Southern States of the United States of America, and soon followed by the opening of the Suez Canal and the new agrarian legislation of the Netherlands East Indies, coupled with the marked increase of population on Java in the 19th century, which brought an abundance of labor, and this explains why Surinam with its scanty population was unable, despite the fertile soil of its coastal region, to compete in the world market with the agricultural products of the East.

Owing to the liberal Netherlands colonial policy—a policy in conformity with the tradition of the House of Orange in the Netherlands through the centuries—the country had been for more than half a century in possession of

a representative body and of a fairly extensive autonomy. Yet this autonomy, with its concomitant, a feeling of responsibility on the part of the country for its own fate, was unable to develop, because the country was financially dependent on the contributions which the treasury of the mother country placed at its disposal.

But on the other hand it was probably the most Dutch among the overseas dominions and was decidedly the territory where there existed the oldest and strongest desire for an adaptation to the culture of the Netherlands. People there were imbued with Dutch sentiments; they remained so in spite of the recently closer economic contacts with the United States, and—people consciously wanted it thus! If, as the French author Gustave Le Bon expresses it, it is *le désir d'être ensemble* that determines the strength of nations, then the foundation of the bond between the Netherlands and Surinam was firm and strong.

The war has brought about sudden changes. Surinam seems at the moment, because of the importance of its bauxite mines for war industry, to have much better prospects economically than might have been expected in case of more gradual development of the aluminum industry. For some of its agricultural products there are opening up again, in consequence of the temporary dropping-out of the Far East as a production area, immediate prospectives such as would hardly any longer have been expected. And the question now is merely to what extent Surinam can meet the demand of the world market, for with its scanty population labor remains the weakest of its production factors. Naturally the country has not been transformed by magic into a flourishing region. The economic foundation is still weak, but there are possibilities and the prospects look different. The important thing now is to preserve these opportunities or to open up new avenues with the means which are derived therefrom. These opportunities or means were previously lacking.

Politically Surinam has arrived at a budget that balances with its own means. Assuredly the prosecution of the war is making great and new demands on the finances. The national economy as a whole is overshadowed by the national defense; and because of the financial consequences which this entails, the effect of a balanced budget—the use of the country's own means in accordance with its own judgment, responsible for its own fate, autonomy in short—can nevertheless not be fully realized at the moment. But the foundation for it has been laid, and if, by means of economical management of the finances, it proves possible to keep the budget sound, the country will enjoy the benefits



thereof after the war. It hardly needs to be demonstrated that this will be able to exert a favorable influence on the development and the character of public life, so that the country will then no longer need to request aid from others for the fulfilment of desires, but will itself have to judge whether it is in a position to adopt particular measures. Netherlands colonial policy would therein have attained after many years a result which had been kept in view as the ultimate goal.

But Surinam's Dutch spirit and the bond with the Netherlands will even then be and remain as they are now.

Together with Curaçao, Surinam constitutes the Netherlands domain in which the sovereignty of her Majesty the Queen is still exercised without let or hindrance. Faithful as ever to the House of Orange, it feels, as a result also of its Dutch-inspired culture, the duty which this position imposes. If it looks up with a feeling of pride to the tricolor and the Orange pennant, which here wave freely, it is, on

the other hand, willing to accept the burdens and to bring the sacrifices which its place in the Kingdom, such as it has now become, entails. It hopes in this way to be able to maintain its own freedom; it hopes that in due time its forces also will be able to co-operate in the liberation of those dominions which are at present occupied by the enemy.

Thus Surinam will not only maintain its place within the Kingdom, but, if circumstances are favorable, will strengthen and confirm it as a worthy member of the Netherlands Commonwealth, which, with its entirely individual culture, history, and tradition, occupies among the nations of the world a position which is so remarkable and indeed hardly to be compared with that of any other. And for the future it will perhaps prove to be a factor of very special significance that, because of Surinam and Curaçao, the Kingdom of the Netherlands will be one of the few nations of the Old World that participate directly in the development of the peoples of the Western hemisphere.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, PARAMARIBO

*Photo U.S. Army Signal Corps*





# THE LAND AND PEOPLE OF SURINAM

by PROFESSOR DR. G. STAHEL

Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station in Surinam

TO most people, "Surinam" is an inhabited strip of the northern coastline of South America. Here lies Paramaribo, the capital, with its population of some 55,000. Here are the large, lush plantations, coffee and sugar, which largely supported the country in pre-war days. Along this coastline, too, lives practically the whole population of the land.

But this coastline strip is only from 10 to 50 miles deep. Back of it, green, unending forests undulate toward mountains. This, too, is "Surinam," and by far the greatest part of it—a country 50,000 square miles in extent, about as large as Wisconsin.

In the center of this primeval jungle is Surinam's geological phenomenon, Tafelberg, a triangular plateau 3,300 feet high, almost flat on top, and roughly 65 square miles in area. Overlooking the jungle and even the plateau, are the Wilhelmina mountains, their highest peak 4,200 feet. Back of this strip of coastline also lies a huge stretch of jungle so wild, so impenetrable that it is totally uninhabited.

From the Wilhelmina mountains drop the "highways" of Surinam—rivers flowing to the four points of the compass—which provide practically the only access to the interior. And in the valleys that have been cut out of mountain and jungle by these rivers live the most backward and, in some ways, the most picturesque members of Surinam's total population of 178,000. They are the 18,000 Bush-negroes, descendants of runaway slaves, and the 2,500 Indians, the only remaining link with Surinam's original inhabitants. The Indians are divided in 3 groups, the Waraus, the Arowaks and the Caribs. Along the southern border are three tribes of Caribs, the largest of which, the Oajanas, number about 350. They locate their villages—there are more than 10 different settlements—along the rivers, and subsist on game, fish and their small garden patches.

These Oajanas are on the move every 4 to 6 years. The cultivated ground, laid out alongside the village, becomes infested with parasol ants. So the Indians move along to a new spot, again lay out their gardens next to their village and again have to abandon the settlement when the parasol ants move in. The system has the advantage, however, of returning the forsaken land to usefulness in the future. For it is overgrown by the forest and the ants die off, being unable to live in dense undergrowth.

The second of the Carib tribes in Surinam are the Trios, today about 100 remaining. They live like the Oajanas, like them hunt with bows and arrows (sometimes poisoned), and trade iron hatchets, arrow points and bits of cotton to wandering Bush-negroes.

Both the Oajanas and Trios are fond of festivities. A big celebration will attract clansmen from remote vil-

lages, sometimes from as far away as the Brazilian interior. Quantities of alcoholic drinks are prepared from manioc flour cooked in water. To aid fermentation, manioc bread, which has been thoroughly chewed, is then added to the brew. It is this practice, combined with the eating from a communal bowl, that is fast making the Oajana and Trios a vanishing race. Somewhere in the past tuberculosis was picked up by the Indians from the Bush-negroes, and eating and drinking habits are spreading it with forest-fire speed. About 35 years ago, the Oajanas numbered approximately 1,000. Today their strength is only one-third of that figure. Other Indians who do not have the communal spirit of the Oajanas and Trios are largely unaffected by the scourge. Yet, recently when Surinam authorities offered to instruct the Oajanas and Trios in more sanitary modes of life, the offer was flatly rejected. They did not care to live like their healthier brethren, these Indians said.

In the mountains above the valleys where the Oajanas and Trios lay out their villages, live the third of the Carib tribes, the Wamas. They are primitive, nomadic and the terror of the valley Indians and Bush-negroes who live in fear of the Wamas' poisoned arrows. These Indians were discovered only six years ago, and had had no contact with the outside world. They have no villages, do no planting, but live only by hunting and fishing. Living always in the dark of the jungle, their complexions are almost white.

The Bush-negroes live along the rivers nearer the coastal strip, and in permanent villages. But it would probably be better for themselves, and certainly better for the land if they had more of the wandering spirit of the Oajanas. For when their cultivated land, which lies behind the villages, becomes infested with ants, they work new plots of ground carved from the forest directly adjoining the old. The ants promptly move from the destroyed gardens into the new. So each year the Bush-negroes' feeding-grounds go deeper and deeper into the forest away from the rivers. The old cultivated tracts, unable to partake of new fertility from the jungle, are eroded by the tropical rains and thus lost to use. Eventually, some authorities say, in 15 to 20 years, the Bush-negroes will have reached the foothills of the mountains, where the soil cannot be cultivated. Then will come famine in the green jungle of Surinam.

The authorities realize the danger of the situation, know what should be done, but are, for the present, almost powerless to do it. If the new feeding-grounds were laid out a mile or so from the old, the intervening jungle would restore fertility to the old tracts. Efforts have been made to persuade the Bush-negroes to do this, but with little success. They will not walk a step farther than they think necessary. They cannot see the danger in their present method of farming. And the settlements are so far apart, and scat-



tered over such a wide territory, that it would be physically impossible for the Government to enforce any edict designated to correct the practice.

However there is hope in another direction. In Coronie, on the coast, there is a Negro community that has been instructed in proper use of the soil. They have limited land, but have been able to make it serve their needs. And the authorities feel that the marshes in the area could be reclaimed and the entire Bush-negro population of upper Surinam transferred to that section, there to farm successfully under the helpful eye of the Government. Steps toward this end undoubtedly will be taken when peace once more makes it possible to devote the greater part of the budget to internal betterment rather than to national safety.

Much of the coastal marsh land has already been reclaimed and it is here that most of Surinam agriculture is carried on. In striking contrast to the primitive and reckless methods of cultivation in the interior the inhabitants of the coastal area have developed their lands with much ingenuity and perseverance. True to the Dutch practice they have diked in the marshy but fertile grounds at the mouths of Surinam's rivers and with the help of locks and a net of draining canals they have built a system of "polders" which have been made to bear a rich harvest of sugar, coffee, cacao and cotton. During the last 30 years this development has been intensified by governmental action and many new polders have been laid out where



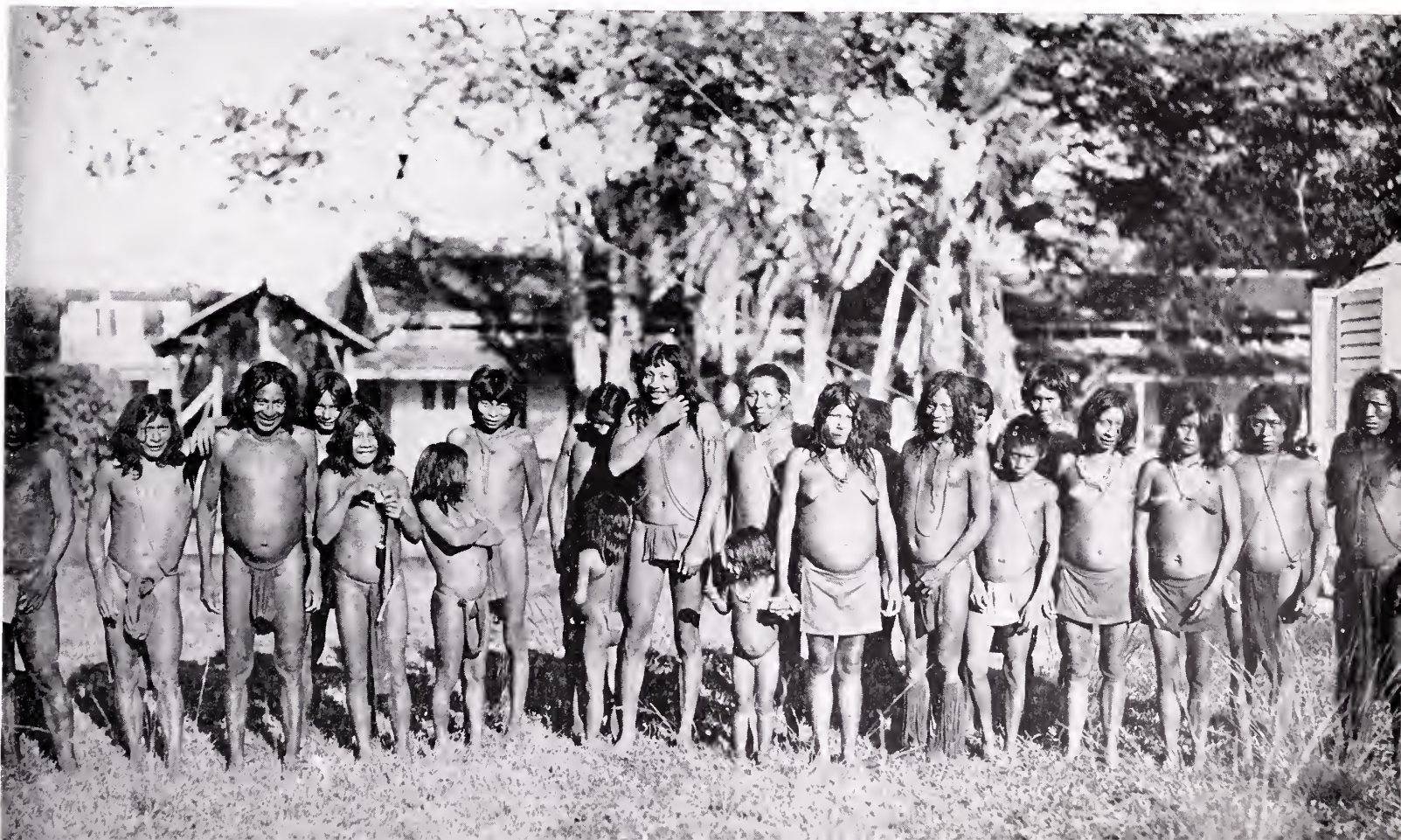
*Photo Fred Hardenbrook*

#### OAJANA INDIAN PREPARING ARROW FOR HUNTING

small farmers, many of them immigrants from Java and British India, grow rice crops.

Thus with their polders, canals and dikes, the Dutch land builders have put their ineffaceable stamp on by far the most important part of this typically South-American territory of Surinam.

#### GROUP OF NATIVE INDIANS







# THE WILD COAST TAMED

## The History of Surinam

by R. D. SIMONS

Inspector of Public Education

**I**N the days of bold adventure, when the seafaring nations sailed out to lay the foundations on which the great civilization of a newly discovered hemisphere was predestinated to thrive. Surinam's history was forged by the adventurers from four European nations.

The Spaniards came in the wake of Columbus, just touching the coast, then sailing farther south to the mouth of the Amazon. "Wild Coast" was the name given to the inhospitable Guiana shores by these early voyagers, and even the greed for gold, which inspired many of the adventurers, did not batter down the conquistadores' fear until nearly a century later.

Reports reached the Spaniards that inland from the "Wild Coast" lay untold riches; a lake, it was said—Parima Lake—had gold dust and precious stones mixed with its sand. And natives lived in houses made of gold. So in 1593 Domingo de Vera took possession of the Guianas in the name of the King of Spain. He was the first European to set foot in Surinam.

The wealth was truly fabulous; it simply did not exist. The Spaniards departed, and the "Wild Coast" was left to await the coming of the next band of intrepids. In 1613, the Netherlands came, a small group that established a trading post but shortly thereafter also retired.

Next, in 1630, were the English, about 60 of them led by a Captain Marshall. They named their settlement Thorarica and built a small fort as defense against the Indians. They cultivated tobacco for shipment to England, but how much actually was raised and shipped cannot be known. For Marshall and the English simply vanished.

Then, the French. The date of their landing was 1640. They numbered 65, commanded by Captain de Noailly. They, too, built a fort—which proved to be of more use

to later settlers. The fate of those French is as unknown as that of the English who preceded them.

The "Wild Coast" was living up to its reputation.

The English tried again, this time in 1650, and they made it stick. Lord Willoughby, Count of Parham, Governor of Barbados and the other English West Indies, equipped a fleet under the command of Anthony Rowsen and sent it to found a colony on the "Wild Coast." Two years later colonization had sufficiently progressed to merit a visit from Lord Willoughby himself. In what we today would call a "whirlwind" inspection trip, Willoughby accomplished much. He concluded treaties with the Indians, established Thorarica as the capital of Surinam, rejuvenated de Noailly's defense work and re-named it Fort Willoughby, and prompted the laying-out of plantations. Charles II, the then ruling King of England, awarded the colony to Willoughby.

In 1667, the Dutch returned . . . with the guns of men-of-war smoking. Two years previously, England and the Netherlands had gone to war. Seven Dutch ships had been equipped by the Province of Zeeland and dispatched to harass the British in the waters of the New World.

With the memory of England's seizure of New Amsterdam probably urging him on, the Dutch commander, Captain Abraham Crijnssen, led his squadron up the Surinam river on February 26, 1667. He claimed Fort Willoughby in the name of the Province of Zeeland and, when the garrison refused to surrender, opened fire. In a few hours, the Standard of the Prince of Orange floated over the newly named Fort Zeelandia, a name which it still bears. When Crijnssen sailed for the Netherlands, he left Maurits de Rama as the first Netherlands Governor of Surinam.

Later that year peace was concluded, and while England



retained what is now New York, the Netherlands was given formal possession of Surinam.

But Lord Willoughby, still Governor of Barbados, was loath to let the colony he had built, slip from his hands. Shortly after peace was concluded, he sent a force which raided Surinam, took de Rama prisoner and plundered the settlement. The following year, Crijnsen was back with his fleet and the Dutch once more governed Surinam.

Years passed with the colony always growing. The Province of Zeeland sold its ownership to the West-India Company. The West-India Company transferred part of its interest to the City of Amsterdam and part to Cornelis Aerssen van Sommelsdijck, and Sommelsdijck in 1683 went out to Surinam as the new Governor. Before his tenure ended 15 years later, he had the once "Wild Coast" thoroughly tamed—and with it the hostile Indian tribes against whom the Governor personally led his men.

But van Sommelsdijck's troubles with the Indians were only the portent of Surinam's next stormy period. Years after the great Governor's death, in 1712, Admiral Jacques Cassard of France, with which the Netherlands were at that time at war, took Surinam and levied tribute upon the colony. Assessed eight or ten per cent of their possessions, many plantation owners sent some of their slaves into the forests to hide. That move merely deprived the French of plunder; it gained the plantation owners nothing. For most of the slaves thus turned loose, did not return.

Instead, they joined with the "Marrons," slaves who had previously escaped. And now the Dutch, fresh from their conquest of the "Wild Coast," had a new and more deadly enemy at their backs. Thousands of Marrons launched raid after raid against the plantations. The depredations became so frequent and on such a large scale that the colonists once more had to take to their arms. Several expeditions invaded the jungle, with varying degrees of success, but finally the colonists had to declare the Marrons free men and peace once more came to Surinam.

It is the descendants of these Marrons who are now known as "Bush-negroes" in Surinam.

In 1799, during the European Coalition wars at the end of the 18th century, when the newly founded Republic fought alongside of the French, Surinam was conquered by the English under Lord Hugh Seymour. Three years later it was restored to the Dutch by the short-lived peace Treaty of Amiens, but the English recaptured it in 1804, under Sir Charles Green and Samuel Hood. This was the beginning of what is termed in Surinam history as the "English Interregnum," a period, remarkable for many reasons, but especially because in 1808 the slave-trade was abolished. Holland, at that time, had lost its independence, having been incorporated in the Napoleonic Empire, and the English played the part of guardians far more than that of permanent possessors of Surinam, which was returned to the Netherlands in 1815, by the peace of Paris, and since then has remained under continuous guidance of the Dutch.

For a land once shunned as too wild for habitation, Surinam had not done too badly. By 1821, Paramaribo, the capital, boasted nearly 1,000 homes. But in that same year, misfortune once again fell. A fire wiped out the

main part of the city; the damage was estimated at 16,000,000 guilders.

The city was restored and the work of building the colony proceeded. Farmers particularly were encouraged to emigrate to Surinam. This immigration continued until about 1873, when changing events made new arrangements for agricultural workers necessary. Importation of slaves had been abolished in 1808; on July 1, 1863—the same year in which President Lincoln freed the American slaves—Emancipation was proclaimed in Surinam. Twenty-one cannon boomed from Fort Zeelandia—the signal that over 31,000 human beings were now free men.

While the slaves were now freed, measures to protect the agricultural life of the colony were necessary, so the Emancipation Act provided that the ex-bondsmen had to enter into 10-year work agreements with the plantation owners. These ten years are known as the period of "State control."

When State control came to an end, many of the Negroes drifted away from the plantations. Once again it was necessary to import labor and some hundreds of Chinese were brought from Hong Kong to Surinam under contract. However, when their contracts were up, they drifted away, most to set up small shops in the towns and districts.

Thus, the Chinese immigration was abandoned, and in 1870 the Netherlands entered into a treaty with England for the importation of free contract laborers from India. This arrangement was more satisfactory and lasted until 1918 when Javanese immigration, begun in 1891, wholly superseded that of the Hindostanis. Today, because of the long period of Indian immigration, Surinam's population is almost 25 per cent British Indian—42,000.

While things had been changing inside Surinam, her relations with and standing in the Netherlands Empire had also been undergoing constant refinement. At first, it will be recalled, the colony belonged entirely to a province of the Motherland. Next, it was owned by a commercial company, then partly by a city and partly by an individual. Later, it became a colony of the Netherlands State, with plenipotentiary governors appointed by the Netherlands. In January 1, 1866, Surinam got self-rule, with a legislative body. But it was still a colony, the decisions of its legislature being subject to approval by the Netherlands Government.

In 1937, Surinam's status was again revised. From a colony it became a "Gebiedsdeel", a "territorial part" of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, on the same footing as the Netherlands East Indies and Curaçao. The implications of this change as well as some of the most recent developments in connection with the war, will be dealt with in other contributions. From a purely Surinam point of view, however, one of the most important of these developments has been the successful balancing of the budget, without any subsidy from the Dutch Treasury, for the first time since about 80 years. Though the cost in drastic retrenchment and heavier taxation has been high, it is admitted by Surinamers and Hollanders alike, that the development of Surinam as an equal member of the democratic Commonwealth of free Netherlands nations can only be facilitated by this remarkable change in the country's financial position.



# PRECIOUS MUD

## Surinam's Bauxite Mining Industry

by THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION BUREAU

THE search for gold brought white men to Surinam, but the yellow metal has never been as important to the world or to Surinam as a whitish-grey clay found along the Surinam River and which, even 75 years ago, was practically valueless. For this clay is bauxite—bombling planes in the raw—the ore of aluminum, the metal of victory.

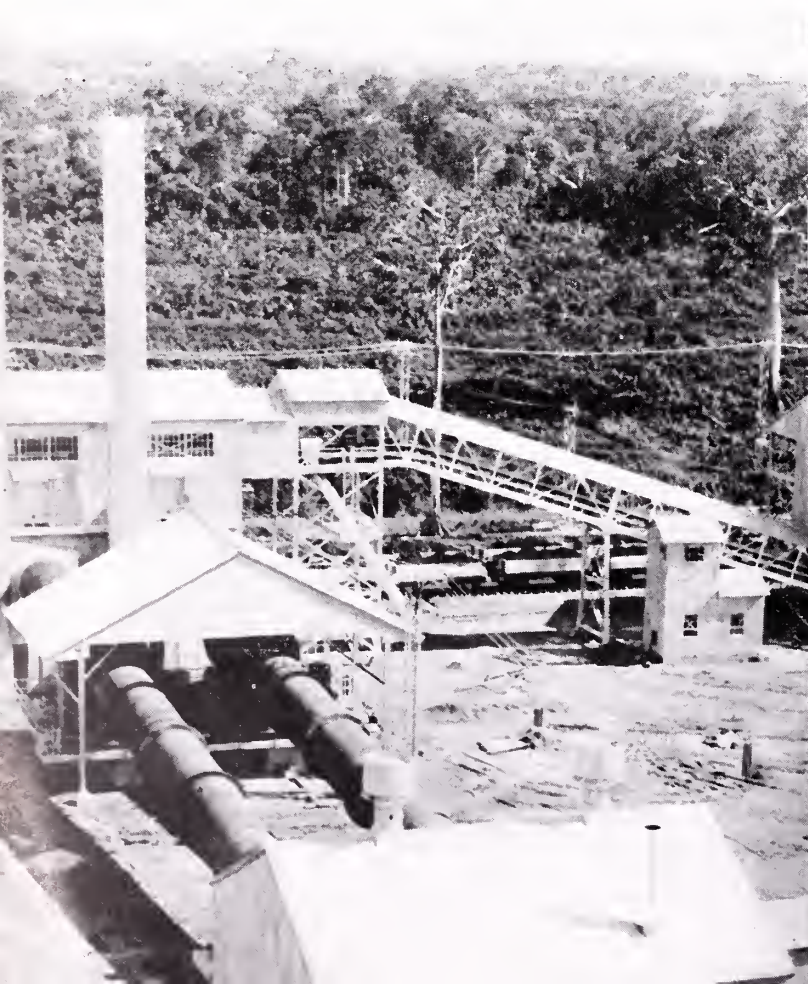
In the basins of the Surinam and Cottica rivers, and in the foothills of the mountains back of the northern coast lie the principal bauxite deposits. They furnish 65 per cent of all the aluminum ore used in the United States. The first World War brought the bauxite of Surinam into prominence. Even in those days of chiefly wooden planes, the importance of aluminum was recognized, and exploratory work in 1915 resulted the following year in the organizing of the "Surinaamsche Bauxiet Maatschappij", a subsidiary of the Aluminum Company of America. Before production could be gotten well under way, the war was over, and due to unsettled conditions in the industry, the first ore shipment did not leave Surinam until 1922. Meanwhile, a modern village, Moengo, had been carved out of the wilderness 104 miles up the Cottica, and a large crushing and drying plant with docking facilities constructed. Thus twenty years ago, Surinam entered the

field of modern industry, and today, when many of its normal sources of prosperity have been temporarily dried up owing to the invasion of the Motherland and the general world situation, bauxite mining gives direct and indirect employment to many thousands of Surinamers who, otherwise, might be at a loss how to earn their daily bread.

Moengo, which can only be reached by boat from Paramaribo, has developed into a modern little town of over 1,500 inhabitants, well managed, and provided with those comforts of life which even the people in the interior may claim as a compensation for hard work.

Bauxite demands have, of course, enormously increased, and the Moengo mill, which was designed to handle 75 tons per hour, is dealing now with double this amount. The annual output, which had steadily moved between 200,000 and 250,000 tons before the outbreak of war, rose to 505,000 in 1939, 615,000 in 1940 and 650,000 in 1941. At the present rate of production the existing ore body will be exhausted within three years, but other deposits in the vicinity contain virtually unlimited reserves, the potentialities of one single hill being estimated at a thirty to forty years' supply. Almost daily one of the freighters of the Aluminum Company of America, of a maximum size of 5,500

LOADING BAUXITE ORE AT MOENGO



BAUXITE INSTALLATIONS AT PARAMARIBO

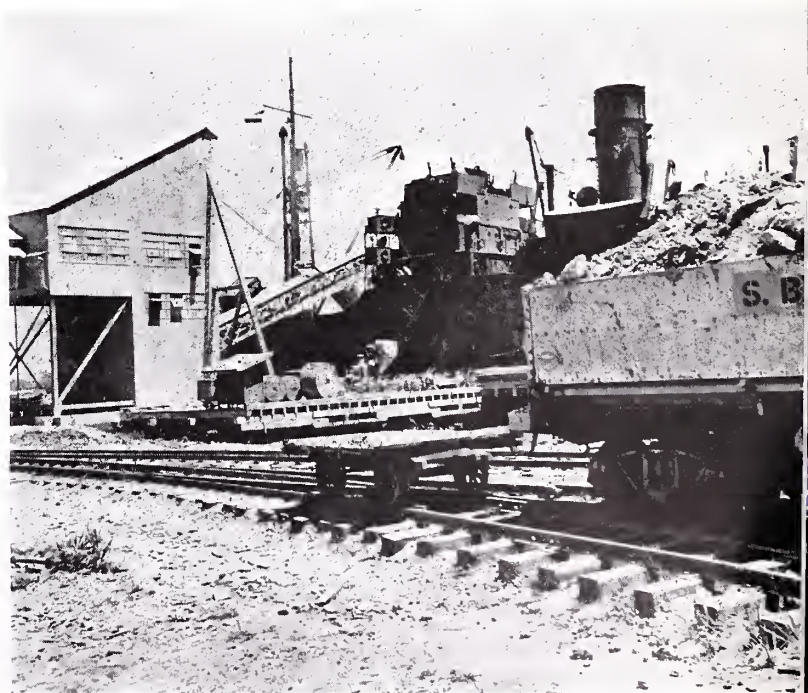
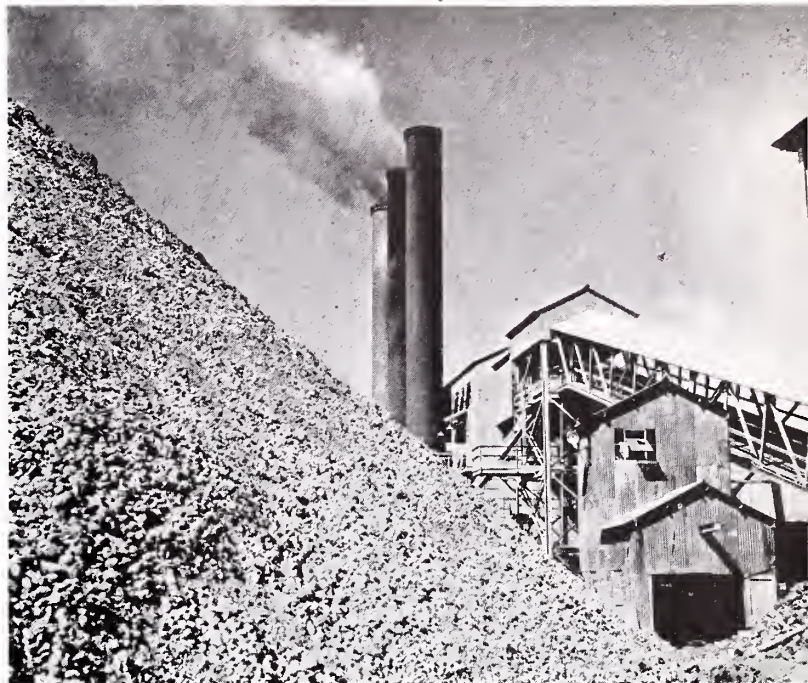




tons and 18 feet draught, carry ore to transshipment points at Trinidad or St. Thomas, or directly to New Orleans, Mobile or Newport News. Although it is mainly at sea that America's bauxite supplies could be threatened, no risks are taken, and in co-operation with their American allies the Dutch have provided for the protection of Surinam's bauxite centres, as an important and essential part of the defense system of the whole Territory. This co-operation dates even from a few weeks before Pearl Harbor, American armed forces having arrived in Surinam as early as November 1941, a step which, of course, was taken in full agreement between the Netherlands and United States Governments. Although the latter was still "non-belligerent", it was understood that they could usefully have a share in the protection of Surinam's bauxite plants and mines, the Dutch having to concentrate all their energies and means upon the East Indies.

Had Holland not been occupied by the enemy in the previous year, the Dutch Government would have been fully capable of providing for adequate protection and defense of Surinam's mining industry, without the slightest harm to the preparedness of the East Indies. Conditions, however, being what they were, American co-operation was warmly welcomed, and considered as being only a logical phase in the development of the whole strategical plan. Since then the danger of a direct attack upon Surinam has receded, thanks to the turn of events in Africa, and the complete change of regime in neighboring French Guiana. Moreover the Dutch and Americans have so thoroughly intensified the defense of the Territory that its position may be now considered relatively safe. It may be added that many months before the Netherlands and United States Governments agreed on co-operation in Surinam, the Priorities Division of the Office of Production Management decided to place aluminum on the "critical list," which meant that the army and navy Munitions Board could issue preference ratings.

Since the early part of 1941 the "Surinaamsche Bauxiet Maatschappij" has started operating a new plant at Paranam, on the Surinam river, within easy reach of the capital. Paranam's ore, of good quality, contains an average of 55% of aluminum; the deposits, however, are considerably less extensive than those at Moengo, extending for rather less than two miles by one third of a mile. Although the new plant has a capacity of ninety thousand tons per month, production in July, 1941, did not exceed forty-eight thousand, as compared to sixty-two thousand tons produced by Moengo in spite of its less modern machinery and equipment. Initial difficulties, however, are being overcome now, and Paranam will certainly not fail to replace Moengo ultimately, in accordance with the company's scheme, as the chief producer of bauxite in Surinam. Not far from Paranam the Billiton Company, a Dutch concern, engaged in the mining of tin in the East Indies, has started operations since 1942. While the ore is of high quality, this district offers certain difficulties, including much overburden, which has to be stripped. This company has built no kilns for the drying of bauxite, which therefore is shipped undried to the United States. Prospects as a whole are considered favorable, although for the present the Billiton's share in the total bauxite production of Surinam is still modest.







GOVERNMENT SQUARE, PARAMARIBO



MAIN STREET, PARAMARIBO



# A DUTCH JUNGLE CITY

by J. H. BOAS

Former Head of the Government Press Service

SOME twenty-five miles south of Paramaribo, the charming capital of Dutch Guiana or, as it is generally called, Surinam, the jungle starts at first rather tame, owing to the inroads made by civilization, but soon in the full might and glory of its uncanny impenetrability and sombre mystery. The city, situated nine miles from the bleak and inhospitable shore, is surrounded by plains, mostly savannah, but partly enriched with luxurious tropical vegetation.

Even to Dutchmen there is something amazing in the "Dutchness" of this city, the more amazing, perhaps, because on a total population of 55,000, the Dutch hardly number 2,000. For Paramaribo is a town of many races: Creoles and Mulattos, Hindostanis, Javanese, Chinese, Libanonese, Syrians, Portuguese and, of course, Hollanders from the Mother country.

Ethnologically the town is partly African, partly Asiatic. No wonder, therefore, that a visit to the crowded market, colorful as the bazaars of the Orient, will hardly suggest a "Dutch" atmosphere; no more will those Hindu gatherings which, on days of great festival, evoke memories of Tigris and Ganges. Yet in spite of all this the town is unmistakably Dutch, which does not mean that one finds any town, resembling it, in present-day Holland. It means only that Paramaribo has the dignified, respectable, somewhat portly aspect, which characterizes most Dutch provincial towns. The Dutch have a word for it, which cannot be translated or even adequately explained: they call it "deftig"; the nearest English equivalent being perhaps "genteel." Add to this that Paramaribo, apart from one or two business streets, has that air of sweet tranquillity which is generally identified with the minor cities of Holland, and that general neatness and cleanliness, which foreign visitors to the Low Countries have marveled at for untold generations, and it will be realized that some of the charms of old Holland are faithfully reflected by this lonely capital city of the jungle.

While it can hardly be said that the architecture of Paramaribo closely resembles the classical Dutch style, being essentially "colonial" and adapted to the exigencies of a tropical land, the main Government buildings and the large private houses in the main streets, although with a few rare exceptions built of wood, and painted white, have a staid Old World air.

The city, which covers a large area in proportion to its population, is laid out according to well designed plans; the main streets are broad and straight, and bordered with magnificent trees; even very few of the bystreets are narrow and crooked. The finest street is the "Waterkant" or "Riverside," on the bank of the immense Surinam river, with some really palatial houses, which demonstrate the grand effects one can obtain with such plain material as wood. But then Surinam abounds with magnificent kinds

of wood, which provide the natural building material to this country.

Although Paramaribo, connected since last year by daily air services with Trinidad and the United States and by half-weekly services with Curaçao, is less isolated from the outer world than before, it lacks the more cosmopolitan and worldly flavor, which distinguishes Willemstad, the capital of Curaçao. There is, in the ordinary sense of the word, "not much going on" in Paramaribo, which boasts only one real hotel, and there are, apart from a few modest bars, no restaurants or coffeehouses where people meet. Home life is everything in this city. There are some good stores, but they seldom go in for the luxuries which have made of Curaçao the great shopping center of the Caribbean. Retail trade is largely in the hands of the Chinese and Hindostanis—most useful members of the community, but seldom inclined to adapt their business ideals to Fifth Avenue standards.

Paramaribo, however, should be judged according to its own standards; the standards of a city which has the jungle for a background and which, while leading the sedate and highly cultured life of an Old World town, is intimately linked up with the surrounding savannah, with the sparsely populated agricultural districts and with the primeval forests, from which the mighty rivers flow to the ocean. One seldom can forget in Paramaribo that, in spite of the smoothness with which this self-contained community is run, the wilderness is all round. Glossy black Bush-negroes, covering their shining bodies with gaudy draperies (the regulations strictly forbidding them to enter the town in the extremely scanty attire of the woods and creeks) are daily visitors to the town where they replenish their scanty household stocks. When they cross the magnificent Governor Square, dominated by the Governor's stately palace, the onlooker cannot fail to be impressed by the contrast between those primitive sons of the wilderness and the refined beauty of the square which, with its monumental Government Buildings, its statue to Queen Wilhelmina, its well kept lawns, its tropical trees and shrubbery, and a park of Royal Palms for a background, would render honor to a great capital.

In recent times the ever increasing bauxite mining industry (which has two of its main centers within twenty-five miles of Paramaribo) and considerable military activity, in which American forces co-operate in the most satisfactory and friendly way with the Dutch and Surinam troops, have imbued the town which, eighteen months ago, seemed to be a rather dull and forgotten backwater, with new life and fresh energy. But whatever may be in store for her in the domain of modern development and increasing trade and traffic, she always will remain proud of her unique position as a great and cultured jungle town, where life is pleasant to those who seek their happiness in home life and in the unpretentious amenities of a land of pioneers.

# A LAND OF SMALL FARMERS

by DR. D. S. FERNANDES

Head of the Department of Agriculture

IN the period immediately preceding the war, the Netherlands and Surinam Governments considered the transfer of thousands of Javanese agricultural laborers, as a means to develop agricultural life in Netherlands Guiana to the high level of prosperity which this territory is certainly able to reach, once the vital problem of labor has been solved. For although Surinam is usually identified with bauxite mining, it always has been, and up to date has remained, primarily an agricultural country. Out of a total population of some 180,000, eighty three thousand, or 52 per cent, are directly engaged in agriculture; including those who are indirectly earning their daily bread in agriculture—such as supervisors on plantations, dealers in agricultural produce, etc., the total percentage mounts to from 60 to 70.

Yet Surinam presents fair opportunities for a far greater agricultural population. Agriculture is mainly confined to the northern coastal zone. But although it is assumed that conditions south of the fifth degree of latitude are far less promising, there remains plenty of room for the extension of existing or the introduction of new forms of agriculture. For reasons which are not generally appreciated, this is of great importance to the future prosperity of the Territory. It may be argued that a smaller population, although unable to fully exploit the natural wealth of a country, will find there, at any rate, means of subsistence, adequate in proportion to their small numbers, and that the average prosperity will not necessarily rise if, by means of the transfer of contract laborers from the East Indies, not only agriculture is extended, but at the same time the number of mouths that have to be fed. But while this may be true in some cases, it certainly is not true in the case of Surinam. A country with a sparse population, provided it is well governed and well administered, is relatively a very expensive country, because there are not sufficient citizens to share the costs of administration. Even if the population of Surinam were doubled, no notable extension of the machinery of administration would be required; in consequence double the population would be available to meet the expenses which are now shouldered by 180,000, or 160,000, for from the economical point of view the 20,000 Bush-negroes and Red Indians, although useful in a small way, hardly count.

This is the crux of Surinam's agricultural, economic and budgetary problems, which will only be satisfactorily solved when after the war the new immigration schemes, worked out within the last period before the great upheaval, are being put into practice.

The labor problem has dominated the position in Surinam from the early days of colonization. For two centuries it was dealt with in a most unethical manner by the importation of Negro slaves from Africa; after the abolition

of slavery, eighty years ago, contract laborers were imported, first from China and the British West Indies, but mainly from British India and Java.

It may be asked why the freed Negroes and their descendants could not do the work which, for so many generations they had been doing under the yoke of slavery. No doubt they could, but as a matter of fact they do not feel themselves attracted to agriculture on a small scale which, in their view, does not guarantee them the standard of living which they deem necessary and which is at a higher level than that found acceptable by the Asiatic groups. Out of 83,000 persons, who are directly engaged in agriculture, only 8,000 are working on the big plantations, each of which measures some hundreds of acres, while the overwhelming majority of 75,000 are linked up for their subsistence with small plantations or plots, measuring from 2 to 5 acres only. The Asiatics, especially the British Indians, parsimonious, hard working and tough, are well fitted for this sort of work, which does not suit so well the special mentality of the average Creole. For this and other reasons the future of Surinam's agriculture, and the economic development of the Territory generally, will largely remain dependent on the immigration of Asiatics, which means, since the immigration of British Indian contract laborers was stopped as long ago as 1917, mainly Javanese.

The lowlands, which are fertile and well within reach of the natural and artificial means of communication, cover about one fourth of the surface of Surinam; only 85,000, or one percent of this total is being cultivated, 27,000 acres being covered by large plantations and 59,000 acres by small plantations and plots.

From these figures it appears that agriculture on a large scale has completely lost its leading position, and that small scale agriculture which came into being when former contract laborers settled, under a beneficial system of Government assistance, on small plots, has become a dominating factor in the economic life of the country. One of the great advantages, which Surinam derives from the much strengthened position of this section of agriculture, is that for its own food it will, under normal conditions, remain independent of import from abroad. Surinam itself amply provides the home market with popular foodstuffs: rice, bananas, (plantains), vegetables, and fruits. The importance of this factor is clearly demonstrated by the foremost popular food, rice. In 1904, 3,170 tons of rice still had to be imported; although the population has since then doubled and the consumption per capita has very considerably increased, rice now no longer needs to be imported except in times of subnormal crops. Since 1930 Surinam has even become a rice exporting country, thanks to the strongly increased production, which has been encouraged by the Government since the first World War. Production totaled 3,000,000





NATIVE TRANSPORT ON THE SURINAM RIVER

kilograms in 1914, 20,000,000 in 1929 and 41,000,000 in 1940. In order to counteract the effects of abnormal droughts, which invariably resulted in disastrous failures of the rice crops, the Government has furthermore executed large scale irrigation works in the district of Nickerie, which is a district of small farmers, wholly dependent on rice. In 1938 over 29 per cent of the total export of Surinam's agricultural products consisted of rice.

Another line of agriculture which is practically entirely in the hands of small farmers, is cocos, which has its seat in the district of Coronie. In 1940 the production amounted to 5,000,000 nuts and 429,700 liters of cocos oil, the latter providing for about half the local requirements. British Indians are proverbially familiar with oil presses, and if these are generally introduced, the industry which at present is carried on in a rather primitive way, may become quite flourishing.

The oldest agricultural product of Surinam is tobacco, which, however, never attained any great importance. Although some tobacco was exported in the 18th century, this industry never progressed any farther than the experimental stage. It is in the hands of small farmers and the crop, which in 1939 amounted to 22,000 kilograms, is readily absorbed by the home market.

Other ancient, and at times more profitable lines of agricultural production are coffee and cocoa. As the berries of the *Coffea Arabica* all ripen simultaneously, a large number of laborers is required for picking them, and it was lack of labor which ruined the coffee industry about the middle of the last century. Since 1881 a beginning has been made with the growing of *Coffea Liberica*; only after 1900 has this cultivation been undertaken on a large scale, followed by remarkable boom periods, although export remained mainly confined to the Scandinavian countries, Spain and Czecho-Slovakia. Later on the position again deteriorated owing to the fall in the prices of the coffee, and since 1936 the Government had to lend assistance to the threatened industry.

Cocoa plantations flourished from the middle of last century, when many of the sugar plantations, which had

gradually declined in importance, had been converted into cocoa enterprises. Owing to foreign competition cocoa plantations were, in their turn, converted into coffee plantations around 1895, when 4,000,000 kg. of cocoa were still sent abroad. The export gradually declined, and today even Surinam's own demand for cocoa cannot be entirely covered by the native production. In the beginning of this century seeds from the *Hovea Braziliensis* were imported into Surinam, and a modest start was made with the cultivation of rubber. Some rubber was exported in 1911 and following years, but the industry was finally totally ruined by disease. Bacoven (banana) cultivation started in 1906 with the support of the American United Fruit Company, but was, after a few years of prosperity, completely destroyed by a virulent visitation of the so-called Panama disease.

The cultivation of sugar, initiated around the middle of the 17th century, has alternately boomed and declined. Today there are three important sugar concerns in Surinam, the largest of which, responsible for 90 per cent of Surinam's sugar production, works with 3,000 laborers. The total production and export of sugar has, however, declined in later years. Sugar's share in the total export of Surinam agricultural products was 39 per cent in 1938 against 41 per cent in 1937.

Agricultural Surinam has its possibilities, even very important possibilities. It has, perhaps, not been very lucky in the past, but at various periods it has struggled bravely against overwhelming difficulties which partly had a natural cause, such as disease, partly a social cause, such as shortage of labor. From the purely agricultural point of view, a solution of the labor problem might be found in wholesale or partwise mechanization, a proposition which has in recent years been thoroughly discussed. It would, however, not provide for that other necessity which is so closely linked up with the whole problem of Surinam's future prosperity—the increase in population by means of immigration from the East, an increase which would bring Surinam into line with its costly but necessary administrative machinery, and improve the economic prospects and the whole standard of living.



# MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO

## Some Facts on Employment, Health and Education

by THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION BUREAU

THE first thing that should be borne in mind when reviewing social progress in a tropical country like Surinam is, that this problem presents difficulties, which make any comparison with the more settled communities, living under different conditions of climate, geography and ethnology, entirely futile. In no country, perhaps, were general conditions less propitious for the success of social development. The isolated position of Surinam, the sparseness of its population, the forbidding character of its jungle and its savannah, seemed to conspire against even the most strenuous efforts to extend to its people the benefits of modern social institutions.

Another no less adverse element in the situation was that Surinam has known only brief periods of real prosperity during the last century.

The abolition of slavery, and the opening of the Suez Canal, which enabled tropical products of the Netherlands Indies to be carried to the European markets at lower rates than those from Surinam, led to the decline of agriculture, at that time the mainstay of the country. The majority of the freed slaves left the plantations and settled in the capital. This accounts for the fact that one third of Surinam's population lives in Paramaribo. As far as housing and sanitary conditions were concerned, Paramaribo was not equipped for such a sudden increase in population and, lacking industries, proved unable to provide sufficient employment for her new inhabitants.

The Government has attempted to deal with this problem by executing certain public works, mainly irrigation, and by facilitating the colonization of the interior through placing unemployed town workers on small holdings in the districts. In recent times, however, strongly increased military activity and the continual extension of the bauxite industries, have considerably eased the position. Today there is hardly any unemployment in Surinam.

What the Dutch have achieved in the sphere of social improvement, under the most trying circumstances, will perhaps be best appreciated by considering a few facts concerning the educational and sanitary situation.

To a population of 180,000 there are 122 schools (4 of which rank as colleges) with a total of at least 22,000 pupils. Part of these schools are public, the majority, however, are run by the different missionary societies, although the Government is responsible for the salaries of the teachers and the cost of maintenance and equipment in schools of both types. In the more remote inland districts opportunity for education is provided at 33 schools, so-called "boschland" or jungle schools.

School attendance has been made compulsory by law since 1874, so that there is hardly any illiteracy among the younger generation, and the Dutch language has become universally used.

Education is the fundamental condition for social progress, and the Surinam community owes much to a policy which, at an early period, gave the whole population the benefit of sound elementary education. In this respect the Territory has been leading the whole of the West Indies until far in the present century, and even today its schools are second to none in this part of the world.

At the time when compulsory education was introduced, matters were complicated by large-scale Asiatic immigration; but the fact that descendants of the original Hindostani contract laborers are to be found among the leading schoolmasters of today, proves how efficient the system has been, and to what degree the Dutch have already succeeded in establishing a measure of cultural unity which is indispensable to social progress and enlightenment.

The health condition of the Surinam population is in general very favorable. The mortality rate, averaging not more than 12.4 per thousand in the last five years, is no higher than in the United States and half as high as in the neighboring countries.

At Paramaribo there is a well-equipped medical college, graduates of which are qualified for full practice in Surinam. They form the backbone of the Government Medical Staff, which, besides treating the sick, pays great attention to preventive medicine by education in hygiene and a strict control of water supply, village sanitation, slaughter houses and public markets.

In the combatting of the hook-worm disease, which is considered one of the most injurious endemic diseases of South America, for many years valuable assistance has been received from the Rockefeller Foundation.

In addition to scores of dispensaries, Surinam has six hospitals, the two largest of which, accommodating some hundreds of patients, are at Paramaribo. The treatment and accommodation of leper patients take place in three modern dispensaries. A lunatic asylum, on the outskirts of the capital, caring for about 270 patients, belongs to the best appointed establishments of this kind in the West Indies.

Surinam's favorable health condition is certainly partly due to the fact that Paramaribo and the surrounding country are served by the most modern waterworks in that part of the world, providing the population with pure drinking-water of an excellent taste.

Much as the Government and the Churches have achieved in the field of social improvement, they by no means pretend that they are satisfied with the situation, such as it is. What they may rightly say is that nowhere in the West Indies is the situation better than in Surinam. Lack of funds has hampered some of the best efforts on behalf of social improvement. Since the economic situation improved, however, new schemes have been prepared, among them a system of labor legislation which, when carried out, will considerably contribute to the welfare of the popular classes.



# BABEL IN THE JUNGLE

## The Vernacular of Surinam

by R. D. SIMONS, Inspector of Public Education

VISITORS call it "talkee talkee." The Negroes call it "Ningre," or "Ningre-tongo" (Negro language), or "Sranan-tongo" (Surinam language). The Dutch call it "Negro-English." But whether you call it "talkee talkee," "Surinam language," or "Negro-English," the fact remains that it isn't the Negro language exclusively and it is not English by any means.

Negro-English is the "man-in-the-street" tongue of Surinam. The Negroes speak it, the Indians speak it, the British Indians speak it, the Chinese, the Javanese, the Portuguese speak it and so do the Dutch. But, although Negro-English is spoken by practically the whole population and may be termed the "lingua franca" between the many races which inhabit Surinam, it does not, perhaps, play such an important part in social and cultural life as Papiamentu in Curaçao. This is due to the fact that, with the exception of Bush-negroes and Red Indians, and some of the newer immigrants from Asia, the whole population of Surinam speaks Dutch fluently. Meanwhile, Negro-English remains equally important in the ordinary business life in Surinam. Containing Negro words straight from Africa, as well as French, Portuguese, Spanish, English, Dutch and even Hebrew, it's a written as well as a spoken language, into which the Bible has been translated, in which songs and stories have been written. It has a host of proverbs. And it has a history as well.

Negro-English was born from the needs created by the importation of slaves. About 1650, the first slaves were imported into Surinam from Africa. Not only did the masters need a common tongue with the slaves, but the latter, having come from different parts of Africa, needed a language to use among themselves. Thus the origin of Negro-English. At first, it was merely a combination of English words and African dialects. But with the coming of other nationalities, quite naturally parts of other languages crept in. And, because Surinam has been almost

continually Dutch for nearly 300 years, Negro-English to-day contains more Dutch derivatives than English!

It is a language that is continually changing, too. In the first edition of the Bible, published in 1829, the word forgiveness is "Dasnoti" (that's nothing). Now the same word is "pardon." Again, the phrase "to come together" formerly was "kom togedere." Now it's "kom makandra" (from the Netherlands "malkander"). The derivations of all the Negro-English words are not that easy, however. For instance, the word "bari," for "barrel," could come from either the English word or from the Portuguese "barril."

All in all, Negro-English is one of the most interesting, if puzzling, things in Surinam. Its proponents down through the years have shown real ingenuity in filling out its vocabulary. There is "hati hoso" for hospital, literally, "house of pains"; "tranga hede," obstinacy, literally, hard head; "lourieurie-fomfom" remorse, literally, "conscience-flogging." The familiar fiddler crab is called "odi odi botoman," that is, "greetings, greetings, boatswain." For, whereas the English see in the crab's waving pincer the movement of a fiddler, the Surinam Negro sees it as a salute to outgoing boatmen!

That the inventors of the talkee talkee language are not devoid of a sense of humor is indicated by their name for a big cigar which they call "loutoe-joto," the literal meaning of which is "around the town." That is to say a cigar so long that one can walk around the town with it before it is finished.

Or there is the word for an impatient person "musra wantem wantem," meaning "Mr. immediately immediately." And if this is not enough to show the nimble spirit of talkee talkee, you might finally consider the ancient proverbs or odos of Surinam in which, to mention but one example, the boastful are mocked with this striking saying:

"Sekrepatoe no habi wiwiri, a kari hem wefi kisi loso."

(The turtle has no hair but he calls to his wife to delouse him.)

VILLAGE SCHOOL AT SANTIHOE





# CHURCH AND MISSION IN SURINAM

by THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION BUREAU

**A**PART from some thousands of non-Christianized Bush-negroes and Red Indians, and including those who do not belong to any religious community, a little less than half the population of Surinam confess the Christian faith. The numbers of adherents to various creeds, not including the members of the armed forces, are as follows:

Protestants	42,027
Catholics	29,124
Jews	1,069
Mohammedans	41,300
Hindus	32,000
Confucians	13,000
Animists, fetishists, etc.	22,000

For Surinam the whole missionary aspect changed when, after the abolition of slavery in 1863, a start was made with the immigration of Asiatic contract-laborers, first from British India, much later from the Netherlands East Indies. The Catholic and Protestant missionaries, working among a population which was almost entirely of African descent, had a fair chance to make a Christian country of Surinam, in which case the history of the Missions would have been largely the history of the cultural development of the Territory. With regard to the newly settled Asiatic population, however, the position became very different.

Mohammedans and Hindus have their own well-organized religious communities with their priests and pandits, and are strongly attached to their old civilization. And Surinam being a free country, they have the same rights to practice their religion as the Christian communities.

Yet it may be said that the Missions, both Protestant and Catholic, have not only been the pioneers of popular cultural development in Surinam, but that they have built up a Christian civilization which embraces practically the whole of the Creole population. They have been working, and achieving great results, in every field of religious activity. Education owes them a great debt; they have imbued the people with the great principles of Christian charity; their ministers have been among the poorest of the poor, yet toiling in order to improve the once miserable standards of living; they have been among the sickest of the sick, yet nursing the afflicted with unconditional self-denial.

Protestant missionary work in Surinam has almost exclusively been carried out by the main Protestant Community in that country, the Moravian Brothers, who today have a membership of about 30,000. The Netherlands Reformed Church numbers 8,600 followers; there are 3,800 Evangelic Lutherans, and nearly one thousand members of smaller Protestant communities.

The first Moravians were sent out to the "Wild Coast" in the eighteenth century, with no other equipment than an unshakable faith. They were untrained; they knew nothing whatever about the country and its vernacular; they were unacquainted with the character of tropical diseases; they were extremely poor, and their only salary was what they were able to earn with the toil of their hands. When setting

sail to their new destination, they could truly say: "Ave, Domine, morituri te salutant." Most of them found an untimely grave in the swamps of Guiana.

But where some fell, others carried on. Even when work among the Negro slaves proved to be impossible, they remained true to Guiana and went to Berbice, there to preach the Gospel among the Red Indians. From there they penetrated deeper into the jungle, where they worked among the Bush-negroes. Gradually, however, the conditions among the Negro slaves became such that a new effort to bring them the Christian faith could be ventured, and from that time on the work of the Moravians made steady progress. They did not stop at making conversion conquests, but did everything to strengthen the positions, captured in the name of the Christian faith, by social and cultural works. Today 31 urban schools and 16 Bushland schools are in the hands of the Moravian Brothers, who, moreover, have established homes for neglected children, needlework courses, cultural film centers, and charitable institutions.

The Catholic Mission started organized work in Surinam much later than the Moravians. It was not until a century ago that they were officially admitted in Surinam, which was elevated to the rank of an Apostolic Vicariate. The Mission is in the hands of the Redemptorist Fathers, and its followers are now equal in numbers to those of the Moravian Brothers. Like the latter, they have done much for popular education. Their 37 schools are visited by 7,400 pupils, against 5,350 pupils for the Moravian and 7,480 for the Government schools. Catholic social and charitable institutions are numerous in Surinam. The most modern hospital at Paramaribo belongs to the Catholic Mission. Both communities are doing great work among the lepers, one of the earliest Catholic missionaries, the Ven. Father Petrus Donders, having succumbed in the service of the afflicted.

The Catholics have made a fair number of converts among the Red Indians, and both they and the Protestants have made some headway among the British Indians and Javanese.

The Jews, although little over a thousand strong, are a highly remarkable element in the religious and cultural life of the country, insofar as they are among the earliest of settlers and have influenced to a considerable extent the development of the Creole population.

The Hindus form a strong and well organized racial and religious community, which, although proud of the Dutch citizenship which its members acquired, entertain cultural relations not only with "Mother India," but with the Hindostani communities in Demerara and Trinidad as well. The number of Mohammedans strongly increased since Javanese immigration was started about a generation ago.

In spite of the great diversity of creeds, relations between the various communities leave nothing to be desired. When at the end of last year a great public demonstration was held in connection with the German atrocities against the Jews, Protestant, Catholic, Moslem, Hindu and Jewish leaders spoke from a common platform and in a common spirit.



# A COMMUNITY OF MANY RACES

by J. H. BOAS

Former Head of the Government Press Service

**I**F the United States can be called a racial melting pot, Surinam might suitably be described as a patch quilt.

Like the United States, its population is composed of many different races but, whereas in this great republic of the North the different racial elements have intermingled to produce a new breed of men, the different peoples of Surinam have largely retained their separate individualities, living next to one another in good harmony and fellowship under the folds of the free flag of the Netherlands. Surinam, in fact, presents on this small scale of its 170,000 population, a true microcosmos of a modern democratic commonwealth.

Living in a country, one, all too easily, takes things for granted, the real significance of which is only realized after one has left. Thus, the striking manner in which, in Surinam, different races live together in a remarkable sphere of "Dutehness," escapes the notice of many observers. Yet, this very unity in diversity may prove to be a dominant factor in the future development of the Territory, besides being a most instructive phenomenon to those who are imbued with the spirit of enlightened Empire building.

Professor G. Stahel, that eminent Surinam scientist, has dealt in another article with the Red Indian and Bush-negro tribes, who inhabit the interior of the country. Ethnologically they are interesting enough, although only the Red Indians are aborigines. For the development of a country, however, the social aspects of its inhabitants are far more important than their ethnological idiosyncrasies, although the latter may serve as a useful background to those whose ambition it is to build up a national community out of various races. The 20,000 Red Indians and Bush-negroes, who lead a tribal life, constitute an element apart in Surinam, having no share in the social life of the ordered community. They fall outside the scope of this article. It is the settled population, in Paramaribo, in the agricultural districts, in the bauxite centers, which is gradually developing into a unity with marked individuality, but with each of the component elements retaining their racial characteristics and traditions.

None of these groups can claim to be the original owners of the country or even the original colonists. Anybody, whether Dutch or Negro or Asiatic, who is born in Surinam, is a "native" or, as they are usually called, Creole. There is a tendency to designate exclusively as such that section of the population which has Negro-blood, who also are frequently called "Surinamers" in contrast to other groups who entered the country at a later period, and are still considered by some of the more narrow-minded sections of the population as naturalized "foreigners," not really belonging to the country. A British Indian (or rather a Hindostani, for the term "British" Indian can no longer be applied to a subject of the Queen), a Javanese, a Chinese and their various mixtures are just as much "Surinamers" as a Negro,

halfcast or Jew, although the latter have been inhabiting the country for more generations.

With this conception the broad masses of the population are growing more and more familiar, and it may be said that this is largely due to enlightened application by the Government of the constitutional rules, which do not discriminate between the various races. So far as such differences are still noticeable in every-day life, they must be put down to individual lack of understanding and tolerance, but such cases are, fortunately, rare and becoming even rarer. Dutch education, while including official encouragement of the ancient customs and languages of the various races, has yet powerfully contributed to unification of the Surinam community, a unification which, although still far from complete, is steadily progressing.

Up to the Emancipation of the slaves, the Negroes were—apart from a minority of Dutch settlers and officials, and (partly Dutch) Jewish and Chinese immigrants—about the sole inhabitants of Surinam. They still are the largest single group, numbering some 70,000 (including the various "mixtures"). But they can no longer claim to be the majority. Hindostanis, immigrated since the Emancipation by the thousands as contract laborers, number 45,000; the Javanese, who have been settling in this country since the first World War, 32,000. There are from 2,000 to 2,500 Chinese, 900 Surinam Jews, who are completely Netherlands in their outlook, 2,000 Hollanders and other Europeans, including, of course, a large proportion of officials who, unless they decide to stay in the country permanently, can not be considered as "Surinamers" in the full sense of the word, and numerous tiny groups and individuals of various origin.

Moulding these various races into a more or less homogeneous community will only be feasible if the homogeneity is not exaggerated, and no attempt is made to model each of them after one artificial pattern. In this respect—like in many others—Surinam is still in a state of transition, but the prospects are most promising.

Increasing intermarriage between members of various groups has been contributing to the progress of unification, although racial traditions, conventions and religious creeds do not, perhaps, encourage this procedure.

Apart from racial differences, and, perhaps even more important than these, there is a difference in outlook between the descendants of the former slave population and the later Asiatic settlers, which may not be entirely eliminated before the lapse of a few more generations. To the former, the abolition of slavery is the great turning point in the country's history—an unassailable conception, of course, which is shared by all other sections of the population but without dominating their outlook and mentality in anything like the same degree. Slavery produces after-effects, which

mould the character of generations to come. Even today

Emancipation Day is celebrated by the Surinam people of African descent not merely as a great historical event, but as a vital factor in the future development of the community; as something which is still going on and will be going on for many decades, in the shape of self-emancipation from the after-effects of the bondage of many generations of ancestors.

But the majority of the population are Asiatic today. They entered the country after the Negroes had regained their freedom; their backgrounds are vastly different: their ancestors may have gone through hard times in their country of origin; they may have known oppression and humiliation and want and misery, but their mental make-up is unaffected by the lingering heritage of serfdom.

In the course of eighty years of freedom the Negro and Mulatto population of Surinam have been making huge progress, in spite of the undeniable impediments, engendered by their past. Among them are recruited the great majority of civil servants and office workers; many of them have made their studies in Holland; some of them distinguish themselves brilliantly in the free professions, while as artisans, colored people have an excellent reputation. The Hindostanis, on the other hand, with their great cultural traditions, surpass them in some respects. Having a special aptitude for commerce, and being extremely parsimonious, many of them have succeeded in setting up thriving retail-enterprises and making a good deal of money. They are, moreover, ambitious and hard working; the second and third generations of Hindostani immigrants have already produced several doctors, lawyers, schoolmasters and cultural

leaders. The large majority of Hindostanis, however, are engaged in agriculture where, as a result of their sober habits and tough physique, they are doing as well as circumstances permit. Their religion—most of them Hindu and a minority Moslem—links them closely together. Their caste system, although not fully maintained in so small a community, works as a foundation of social order, and is deprived in Surinam of most of the unsocial aspects which spoil it in India. They find moral and intellectual leaders in their own pandits, some of whom are men of considerable culture, and have a clear conception of what this Netherlands community means to the descendants of the Hindostanis, who once joined it as poor contract laborers.

The Javanese, whose immigration started only a generation ago, have naturally not been able to work themselves up as a group to a place of influence comparable with that occupied by the Hindostanis. Most of them are engaged in agriculture and horticulture, where they make the best laborers one can desire. They are a mild, highly attractive people who, in their native land, have produced great art and great ballads, but in "the world's wide field of battle" they are, perhaps, not equipped with the same warlike qualities as the energetic Hindostani; far from parsimonious, and uncommercially minded, they will not easily make a material success of life. But they are highly valued as agricultural workers, especially on the rice fields and sugar plantations. By nature the Javanese are a homesick people, which will astonish nobody who has ever visited the delightful island which they hail from. The Government therefore has enabled them to live in Surinam in so-called "dessa-communities," on the same lines and in similar environments as on Java. The system may have certain drawbacks from the social and economic point of view, but on the whole it works well, and it is, perhaps, the only practicable one for the first and second generations of Javanese settlers.

Chinese came originally to Surinam as agricultural laborers, and as such they were hardly inferior to the Javanese. Being, however, endowed with a special knack for commerce, most of them finally established themselves as store-keepers, and the retail trade, especially in the Districts, is largely in their hands. They are a respected section of the community; their social life is well developed, and members of the American forces learned to like and respect them when they repeatedly met them in basketball matches.

Under Dutch leadership, these various races are co-operating harmoniously in building up a community which, in its smallness, can only survive and thrive on the foundation of loyalty to the crown and a keen sense of common interest. There may, occasionally, rise some anxiety; the black population may, at times, fear that the Hindostanis and Javanese will finally crowd them out and supersede them as the leading section of the population; the Hindostanis, on the other hand, may sometimes suspect that they do not get a fair deal, and are still too much considered as mere "coolies." It is the task of the Dutch rulers to bring the various races together; to co-ordinate their interests and their efforts; to educate them in the free principles and free thoughts, which are identified with Dutch traditions; and to co-operate with the legislative body, in which all races are represented.

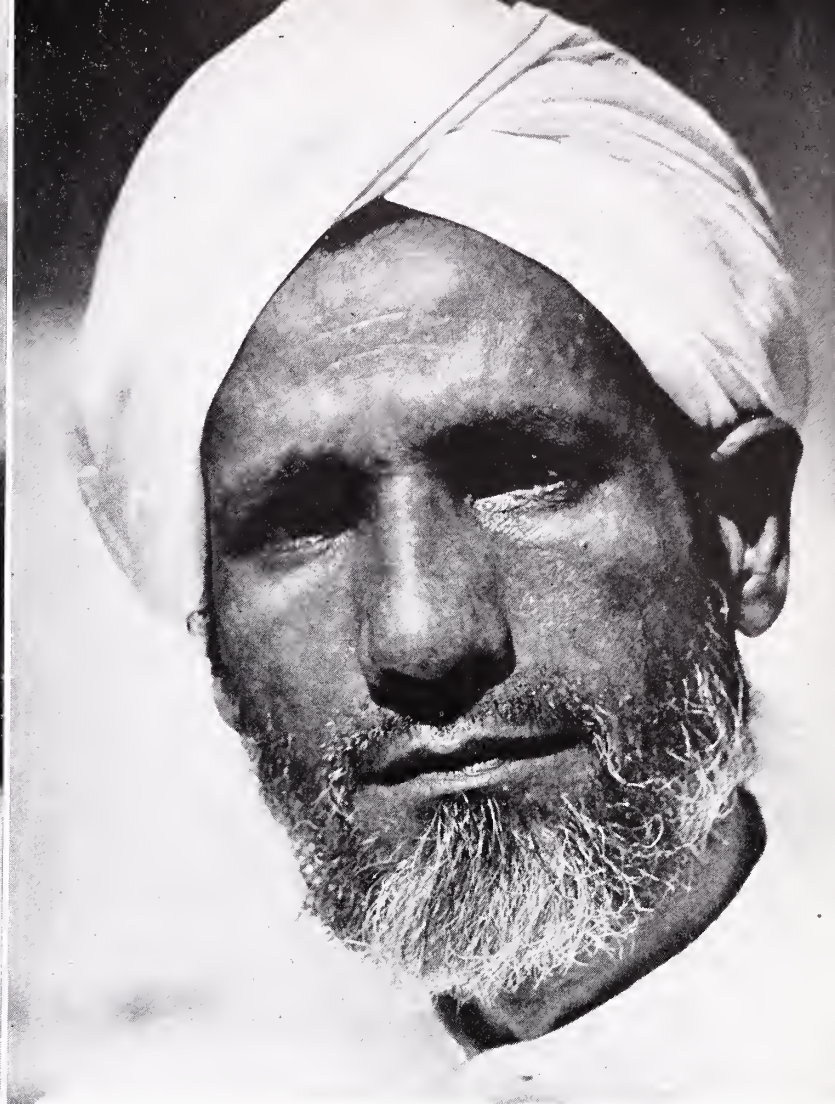
HINDOSTANI WOMEN







BUSH-NEGRO WOMAN



MOHAMMEDAN PRIEST



HIGH CASTE HINDU WOMAN



NATIVE WOMAN IN KOTTO MISSIE DRESS



# SURINAM IN A STATE OF CONSTITUTIONAL TRANSITION

by THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION BUREAU

UNLIKE the Asiatic parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Surinam has hardly any aboriginal population. There are a couple of thousand Red Indians, and it may be assumed that, before the white man came to these shores, the native population, consisting of some nomad tribes, was not much more numerous than it is today. Practically the colonizers found here a virgin country, which had attracted them because it was rumored that it contained fabulous quantities of gold. It did not, but it offered certain agricultural possibilities which, if properly exploited, might bring more lasting prosperity to the settlers than legendary gold. Thus Surinam became, in the 17th and 18th centuries, an agricultural settlement with hundreds of plantations. As the moist tropical climate did not allow the average European to till the fields, labor was imported from the African slave market, and in a later period, after slavery had been abolished, Asiatic free labor was recruited from British India and Java. All those people, whether white or brown or black, were "colonists"; none of them were "natives." There never was a "colonized" or conquered aboriginal population; it was the country itself which had been colonized. Its position could therefore be compared to that of the North American Colonies before the War of Independence, although, as a consequence of its climate and isolated situation, its development was bound to be much slower.

Surinam therefore has the character of a settlement under Dutch control. In this territory the question, whether and how the original population should be restored to the possession of its native soil and legitimate rights, could never arise because there was no such population. They were settlers all, although they belonged to very different races. And this should be taken into consideration if one wants to understand Surinam's gradual development from a mere colony into a self-governing Territory of the Kingdom.

Today Surinam is governed under a Constitution which is based on a law, passed by the Dutch Parliament, and not by any native legislative body. Under this Constitutional Act, which was revised as recently as 1937, Surinam enjoys a considerable measure of local self-government and democratic control.

The Governor shares the executive power with a Privy Council, which is composed of some high officials and a number of leading private citizens. In legislative matters, however, he largely depends on the co-operation of a representative body of old standing, the "Staten van Suriname", consisting of fifteen members—ten of them elected under a system of limited suffrage; the five other ones being appointed by the Governor, in order to assure that all main racial groups be represented. The Governor, members of the Privy Council and heads of departments are not eligible to the "Staten", but they may attend the meetings, each of them dealing with the affairs of his particular depart-

ment. The main prerogative of the "Staten" is that they have the right to *fix* the budget. Up to 1941, however, Surinam's budget had never been balanced, so that the Government at the Hague had to cover the annual deficit which, in 1940, amounted to three million guilders. This unhappy circumstance has hampered the political development of Surinam as an autonomous territory. Virtually Surinam was deprived of the management of her own affairs so long as the States General at the Hague, having to grant the money, were entitled to decide how the money voted by them, was to be spent. It was only in 1941 that Surinam managed, not without great sacrifices, to balance her budget for the first time in nearly eighty years, and although it remains to be seen whether and in how far the country will be able to maintain its financial independence in a more distant future, this was a tremendous event which stimulated national self-respect to a remarkable extent.

The "Staten van Suriname" are the only representative body in the country. There are no municipal or district councils, and even Paramaribo, the capital, a city of some 55,000 inhabitants, is administered by a Commissioner, under the direct authority of the Governor. For administrative purposes the country is divided in half a dozen districts, each under a District Commissioner—a system which works extremely well. District Commissioners are, as a rule, recruited from the East Indian Civil Service, a highly trained body of men.

Even within the framework of the present constitution there remains plenty of room for democratic development, but under the present state of war, while the Governor is vested with extraordinary powers, conditions for such a development are unfavorable, even though the desirability and justice of it are generally recognized. Moreover one feels that temporary adjustments would be of small importance, compared to the greater scheme of constitutional reform for the Kingdom as a whole. While for the present, therefore, the technique of government and administration is still far from conforming to the highest democratic ideals, the Constitution does contain all the essentials of civic freedom. If democracy means decisive influence by an elected representative body on the government of a country, it has perhaps not advanced very far in Surinam, but, as a very able Surinam writer on Constitutional law, Mr. C. R. Biswamitre, pointed out in a recently published treatise, the basic rights of the individual, which are the foundation of any sound democracy, are assured. Far more essential than the rules of government and administration, such as they are established in the Constitutional Act, are "certain inalienable rights", among which the framers of the American Declaration of Independence mentioned "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Surinam has her "Bill of Rights," which is the foundation of true democratic development, for whereas the despotic or totalitarian State com-



pletely subordinates the vital interests of the individual to the supremacy of the State, a democratically minded constitution is based on the principle that the life, liberty and happiness of the citizens must be safeguarded.

None of these essentials can be assured without juridical warrant, guaranteed by an independent and impartial judiciary. Thanks to such a judiciary the basic rights of the citizens of Surinam are fully safeguarded, and it may be said that even now, under a state of war, while the powers of the Governor are considerably extended and many constitutional safeguards temporarily suspended, no Surinamer can ever be threatened with arbitrary measures. When considering the constitutional and political situation of Surinam, we have, of course, to take into consideration that this community developed from a slaveholding country, where slavery was only abolished in 1863. The Creole population, reinforced in later years with tens of thousands of immigrants from British India and Java, had to be gradually educated to more advanced levels of national life and civic consciousness. The many thousands of Hindustani and Javanese immigrants, and their descendants in the second and third generation, had to adapt themselves to new surroundings, very different from their homelands. This was a slow process at the best. It was quickened, however, and the results were strengthened, by a system of popular education which, for a long period, counted among the best in all the West Indies, and today there are only a few illiterate Surinamers outside the jungle.

The Surinamers are still far from being moulded, or having themselves moulded, into a real national community: although Dutch and Negro-English are generally spoken, the various races have largely preserved their native characteristics—a tendency which the authorities wisely encourage, but which is, perhaps, not conducive to parliamentary and democratic development. As a result political parties, in the proper sense of the word, are virtually unknown in Surinam, and members of the Representative Body are elected on their personal merits, and not on any party platform.

Economic adversities have, in a long succession of years, somewhat impeded the development of civic life to higher standards of political consciousness, but a new spirit has been noticeable in recent months, partly as a consequence of much increased military activity, partly owing to increased self-respect since the balancing of the budget. There is hardly room in this article to touch on the radical constitutional reforms, which the Netherlands Government in London are planning, but there is in Surinam a substantial current of sound Commonwealth sentiment, inspired by the ideal of unity and close co-operation between the different parts of the Kingdom on an equal footing. If Surinam is able to maintain her newly acquired financial independence, it certainly will deserve the far more considerable measure of autonomy which has been promised by H. M. Queen Wilhelmina in her well-known address on Dec. 6, 1942.

# SURINAM

## AND THE WAR

**W**HAT does the war mean to Surinam? And what does Surinam mean to the war? One might answer in one single word "Bauxite" and add a few statistics so far as they are available and pride oneself on having performed a good day's work. Yet, Surinam and the war mean something more and something very different to each other.

For Surinam the war may be divided into four distinct periods. First came the period of neutrality which, of course, ended on the 10th of May, 1940, when the Germans invaded the Homeland. It was followed by a long period of belligerency which, owing to the isolated position and the relative safety of this country, lacked in many respects the real atmosphere of war. The arrival of American armed forces brought Surinam nearer to the realities of war, making the people more alive to the great emergencies of war and to the perils which might even threaten the safest countries on earth. Finally the whole position changed when the great struggle in the Southwestern Atlantic was unchained, and the Netherlands East Indies, after heroic resistance against overwhelming odds, fell into the enemy's hands.

Suddenly two small Netherlands Dominions in the Western Hemisphere, numbering together no more than a few hundred thousand inhabitants, had become the guardians of that great humanizing civilization which, for centuries past, has been the pride of the people of the Netherlands. True, our merchant ships were sailing the seas, carrying the raw materials of war from their sources to the arsenals of freedom; the Dutch flag was streaming from many friendly shores; great Dutch traditions were honored in many countries at whose cradles ancient Dutch adventurers had spoken brave words of blessing and good cheer. Yet, of all the great Empire of the Netherlands there remained only Surinam and Curaçao under the folds of the Dutch flag of Freedom.

Not much need be said of those first eight months of neutrality.







SURINAM W.A.A.C. ON THE MARCH



The invasion of the Low Countries, on the 10th of May 1940, took Surinam rather unaware. Although it was generally known that Holland's position was far more uncertain than it had been in the last war, it was by no means generally realized how threatening the situation was. When the first news of the fighting in Holland became known, the multicolored population, in a spontaneous gesture of patriotism and attachment to the Crown, assembled in Government square and, gathered round the Queen's statue, solemnly renewed their oath of allegiance. Local enthusiasm became more subdued when, after a few days of heavy fighting, the whole of the Low Countries was overrun by the enemy. There certainly was no lack of appreciation for the very brave stand, made by the Dutch under the most trying circumstances; yet this small community keenly felt the extreme gravity of the situation, once the Motherland had fallen entirely into the enemy's hands. In the first place it was hard to say in this isolated country what it all really meant. Did it mean the end of the Netherlands as an independent nation? The question may seem absurd today, but three years ago many people in Surinam felt as if the end of all things had come. Suddenly all material ties with the Motherland were broken; for all practical purposes the Motherland no longer existed. The German armies were well on their way to the conquest of Europe. Holland had not merely been invaded; it had been engulfed by an overwhelming wave of conquest. Little wonder if this small community felt orphaned, helpless, and in the grips of black despair. In a material sense it was dependent on the Motherland; the awful problem of making a living in the dark days to come, presented itself to every mind. There was, of course, the United States, which had a considerable share in the economic life of this country, and which, as a buyer and seller of goods, might contribute in a large measure to its economic balance. But it was not merely a matter of economic balance; it was above all a matter of moral and national survival. It was the country's soul, the country's Dutchness which, for some weeks of terrific mental agony, seemed to be in deadly peril.

The Government took prompt measures to safeguard the critical economic situation. Surinam's commerce was hard hit. There was a temporary shortage of some popular food-stuffs. The currency situation might become threatening. Unemployment was rapidly increasing. The economic and social structure did not rest on unshakable foundations. The Government at once took measures to control prices, especially of food and clothes. Plans were made for growing more food, particularly rice and vegetables. Currency was strictly controlled. At the same time the European situation became less obscure. In the first place it became clear that the Netherlands Government, far from having surrendered, was organizing the vast resources of the Indies in order to continue the struggle in close alliance with the British Empire. The whole of the European Continent lay open to the German armies, but the mighty rock of Britain stood firm and unconquerable in the extreme hour of battle. The Dutch mercantile marine were sailing the seas; new Dutch armies were recruited in Britain; and in occupied Holland the spirit of resistance was mounting high.

In Surinam itself things were not looking too bright. Drastic measures of retrenchment, affecting the whole popu-



lation from the Governor downward had been introduced; many essential social measures had to be put off; but the country as a whole was prepared to see it through, and not without hope that at long last the tide would turn. Moreover there was, for the time being, a Western Hemispheric feeling of security. It was realized that, so long as the United States was not engaged in the struggle, the enemy would not dare to touch any part of America, not even if it belonged to a hostile Empire, like Surinam. This security, although reassuring in itself, was not wholly satisfactory. The United States was non-belligerent; however friendly and sympathetic it might be, it belonged to another group of powers than the Netherlands. Its political interests were not identical. Since President Roosevelt's re-election nobody could doubt that it would go on lending all possible help "short of war," but there was a world of difference in this qualification. Surinam belonged to two different worlds; first of all to an Empire at war from which, however, it was separated by thousands of miles; in the second place to the great American community to which it was linked by ties of geography, economy and security. So long as it was America's determination to keep this Hemisphere out of the war, Surinam's interests as a part of the Dutch Empire and as a part of the South American Continent did not, perhaps, fully cover each other. Yet the arrival of American troops strengthened the war-mindedness of the population which, since the hectic days of May, 1940, had been rather dulled and blunted by uneventful and tedious months of inactivity, isolation and slow economic adaptation. For Surinam the war had reached a new stage, and this became abundantly clear when, a few weeks after the arrival of the first U.S. contingent, the Japanese launched their treacherous attack upon the United States and Britain, and the Netherlands Government, without a moment's hesitation or delay, declared war upon the ag-

gressor. Overnight the American troops in this territory had become our allies in the full sense of the word. Americans and Dutch were fighting side by side in the Southwestern Pacific; they might fight side by side anywhere in a common cause; one day they might even fight side by side on the soil of Old Holland. Surinam's isolation had gone. It felt the stimulating strength emanating from an immense Continent, united in solidarity and unity of purpose.

When after a brave and desperate stand, the great Empire of the East Indies had temporarily fallen into enemy hands, Surinam and Curaçao became conscious of the proud and tragic duty, laid upon their shoulders by the devastating course of events. And it was felt by people in this country, that for the future of the Empire it might be a thing of overwhelming importance that in this war the last remaining free soil of the Netherlands is situated in the New World.

Surinam's position with regard to the war was finally consolidated when, since the spring of last year, the country and its population were fully adapted to the exigencies of warfare. Obviously the measure in which the Surinam armed forces have recently been increased and mechanized cannot be disclosed, nor are we allowed to refer to the considerable works of defense which have been carried out under expert leadership. But what can be said is, that Surinam today is a well defended country, and that all classes and races of the population have their share in the new system of territorial defense. Apart from the regular army, which at present is probably the largest Dutch fighting force on Dutch or Allied soil, Home Guards, including an auxiliary women's corps, have been trained, it obviously being their task to safeguard the country's safety once the regular troops (Surinam as well as Dutch) are called upon to join the Allied armies, wherever the final struggle for liberation may be unchained.









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DR. P. A. KASTEEL

# FOREWORD

by DR. P. A. KASTEEL

Governor of Curaçao

**A**LMOST three hundred and fifty years ago a group of Netherlands settlers on a small island in the South Caribbean and hoisted their proud tricolor over those lands, known in the Netherlands Constitution as Curaçao.

Although the original governmental control by the chartered trading companies changed at a later date into the Sovereignty of the State, the people of Curaçao, Aruba, and the other islands have in a very real sense been united with the Netherlands throughout these three centuries. The toil and effort of the original settlers and of their successors has promoted a deepened, a more fervent sense of indissoluble solidarity. This feeling of unity finds legal expression in our Constitution, which makes these islands an integral part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

In a cultural sense, much has been contributed here by Netherlands men and women who gave to these islands so much of themselves and of their homeland. Although they brought with them the culture of the Old World, they did much to preserve and maintain that of the New. Thus we find that peculiar philological phenomenon, Papiamentu, being preserved through the centuries. Classical texts have been translated into this vernacular and a grammar for it has been written by a Netherlands priest, born in Aruba. Today, even newspapers are published in this language.

Let me interject here a broader thought—it is this cultural background and adaptability which so peculiarly fitted the Netherlands to manage a large empire. Those cultural

roots are so deeply entrenched in the lives and spirits of the people of her domain, that no brute force can ever tear them out. Though the Netherlands may be for a while under Nazi control, though the East Indies may be occupied by the Nipponese aggressors, the National spirit which has made the Netherlands a world power carries on; the Nation itself survives.

In Curaçao and Aruba, which together with Bonaire, St. Maarten, Saba, and St. Eustatius comprise the Netherlands territory of Curaçao, are found two of the world's largest oil refineries. In Aruba, that of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, and on Curaçao that of the Royal Dutch Shell. In these two refineries, more than half the oil necessary for the war effort of the United Nations is being refined. This fact alone shows the tremendous importance of this Netherlands territory. The activity of the enemy testifies to his knowledge of the value of this key position. His submarines not only prey on the lanes through which the tanker fleet carries the crude oil from Venezuela, but menace those on which the refined product flows to the aid of the Allies. Those shells which were fired at the installations at Aruba, were not fired alone against the Netherlands but against the whole defense system of the United States and of the United Nations. For Curaçao guards one of the approaches to the Panama Canal, the vital artery of America.

In the defense of those ideals which we hold so dear, in the battle against this common enemy, we welcome American aid here as allied aid in the battle for freedom. We are happy to see American and Netherlands camps side by side; Old Glory floating next to our own red, white, and blue flag. These two flags and these two peoples have so much in common, both historically and temperamentally. We cannot forget that New York's great Governor was the Netherlands' Peter Stuyvesant, who was Governor of New Amsterdam as well as of Curaçao. We cannot forget that America's great President, one time Governor of New York, is of Netherlands descent and is proud of it. The Netherlands, which has seen so many of its sons go forth to help build this great Republic, and the United States, whose sons are today defending that common heritage, feel themselves strongly united by these ties. Nor is this alliance an artificial one; it was born and is nurtured by a strong feeling of a common culture.

Curaçao has always been that part of the prosperous and peace-loving Netherlands Kingdom which was most dependent on the United States. Big freighters and passenger steamers arrived weekly, bringing with them the products of North American soil and industry. American tourists were always very welcome guests and in turn many of our people spent their holidays in the States. American literature is enjoyed here. American cars, American frigidaires, and many other American products find waiting customers.

These Netherlands islands form a territory which welcomes the influences, culture and products of South, Central and North America. In the good neighbor policy of the



Americas, our kingdom, especially that part of it in the Western Hemisphere, takes its place willingly.

Today, with the temporary subjugation of the Netherlands and the East Indies, these islands with Surinam are the only parts of the Kingdom over which the Netherlands flag still floats freely. Our responsibility is a great one. Destiny has entrusted to us the glorious history and culture of the Netherlands Kingdom. This is an obligation not only to maintain unity for our Kingdom but, by so doing, to contribute to the unity of the whole world. We shall try to carry this responsibility with the same courage and resolution as our brothers are showing in other parts of the world in the face of severe tyranny.

The time will come when the Netherlands will again be free; when the House of Orange, so closely united with our

history, will once more reign over a united Kingdom. Then again thousands of tourists from the United States will walk through the streets of Willemstad; they will visit Aruba and the rural Bonaire, interesting Saba, quaint St. Maarten and historic St. Eustatius.

Then shall the friendship between Curaçao and the United States grow still greater. American Forces will, we hope, take home pleasant memories of us just as we shall keep most pleasant memories of them.

The world is dark now, but even in its darkness we can be sure of one thing:

That for which millions prayed and sighed,  
That for which hundred thousands fought,  
For which so many freely died,  
God cannot let it come to naught.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WILLEMSTAD





# WAY STATION OF COLONIZATION

## HISTORY OF THE TERRITORY OF CURAÇAO

by W. MEYER

Principal of Peter Stuyvesant High School, Willemstad

A FLORENTINE navigator, Amerigo Vespucci by name, set forth, in the late 1490's on a "voyage of exploration and discovery." Whether his explorations and discoveries were important, has been lost in history, for Amerigo (or Americus) is mainly remembered today for having given his name to America. And the name, originally applied to what is now South America, crept north until today it is chiefly used to identify the United States of North America.

The territory of Curaçao—two groups of three islands each—is linked in history to the United States by more than a common kinship to a Fifteenth Century adventurer. The last, and great, Dutch governor of New Amsterdam (New York) had previously been governor of Curaçao; when presiding over the one he saved the other by troops; when in New Amsterdam he saved Curaçao by food. St. Eustatius, in the Territory, was the transshipment point for much of the food which fed the American Revolutionists. And in the harbor of that same island, the Stars and Stripes were officially saluted by the representative of a foreign power for the first time in history—an act which was one of the contributory causes of a war.

But all that came later; Curaçao as a colony was old by then. The island, which gives its name to the entire territory, was discovered in 1499 by a young Spanish nobleman, Alonso de Ojeda, who in May of that year had sailed with Amerigo, and as they were sailing in the cause of Spain, discoveries went to the Spanish crown. For a century, the Spaniards shipped salt and Brazil-wood from Curaçao and the neighboring islets undisturbed. Then the carracks of the Dutch and British began ranging wider and wider. By 1600 it was quite impossible for Spain's ships to sail unmolested on the Caribbean. Hollanders and Zeelanders were lurking everywhere. Many a bulging galleon fell prey to the "Beggars of the sea," but the raids were only pin-pricks and could have no permanent value when the raiders had to return to bases thousands of miles away. And all the good harbors in the New World were in Spanish hands.

After the Dutch West India Company was formed in 1615, an expedition was fitted out to wrest from the Spaniards—with whom the Netherlands had been at war since 1568—a base in the Caribbean. It failed. An attack on Porto Rico was beaten off by the Spaniards. In 1628,

FORT AMSTERDAM, WILLEMSTAD

*Photo Royal Dutch Airlines*





Admiral Piet Hein undertook another expedition and although he captured a great Spanish silver fleet off Cuba, the Company still had no overseas base. In 1634, another try was made. Only four ships, a much smaller fleet than in 1625, under Johannes van Walbeeck and Pierre le Grand, reached Curaçao and the Spaniards quickly surrendered. The Hollanders took the prisoners to Venezuela and returned to the island to establish another Dutch colony in the Western Hemisphere.

In 1643, the Territory of Curaçao received a new governor—a tempestuous, stomping, storming man whose ability and capacity for hard work equalled his temper. Peter Stuyvesant was his name, and under him Curaçao and the other islands became the commercial center of the entire Caribbean. In its harbor rolled ships of all nations, fitting out, taking on supplies, leaving shipments to be picked up by other vessels—through Curaçao passed much of the supplies for all the New World colonies. Stuyvesant's regard for the welfare of his country's colonies spread far beyond his own small domain. Once, in 1644, two hundred soldiers arrived from the Netherlands-held strip of Brazil. They were on their way back to Holland, but the Governor sent them instead to New Amsterdam. And they arrived there in time to save the colony from rampaging Indians.

Six years later, New Amsterdam repaid that service. The people of Curaçao were then near starvation. But they were saved by a food-laden ship from New Amsterdam . . . sent by Peter Stuyvesant! For "stubborn Peter" had remained but three years on the island. New Netherlands offered a wider field for his talents and in 1647 he departed from Curaçao. But after the Dutch had shown its possibilities, other European nations were not so content to leave it alone. While at war with the Netherlands in the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, the French twice attacked the island and were twice beaten off. Again, just after the turn of the Eighteenth Century, the French sailed against Curaçao. A force effected a landing and bombarded Willemstad. If it had pressed the assault, the city would have fallen, but the French were bought off with 130,000 florins, partially paid in goods and slaves.

A long period of peace followed, during which the Territory of Curaçao flourished. By the time of the American Revolution the islands had more than ever become the shipping center of the New World. On occasion as many as 700 ships lay to in the harbor of St. Eustatius at one time. When supplies from Europe to the American colonies were cut off by the British, it was through St. Eustatius that they flowed. Later on a ship from the still struggling North American Colonies put into St. Eustatius, and Governor de Graaf ordered the American flag flying from its halyard to be saluted with eleven cannon shots.

A few years after this remarkable incident the British declared war on the Netherlands and sent a fleet under Rodney to St. Eustatius. There was not a single Dutch man-of-war in the vicinity and the island easily fell. After sacking the island, the English left.

Once after that the Territory of Curaçao passed to England temporarily—but peaceably this time. During the French Revolutionary Wars, the last of the Dutch Stadhouders, Willem V, took refuge in England, and soon the



RUINS OF OLD SLAVE HUTS

Netherlands were invaded by the French. In order to keep the overseas possessions from falling into the hands of the enemy, Willem ordered them to place themselves under the protection of England. Curaçao complied, but reluctantly, and only after it had been attacked by a French fleet from Guadaloupe.

When peace was restored in Europe in 1815, Curaçao again broke out the Dutch standard over Fort Beekenberg, and the islands prospered in peace until May 10, 1940.

The century and a quarter which passed between 1815 and the day upon which the Germans invaded the Netherlands, has been a long period of peaceful and prosperous development for the Motherland and the territories overseas; especially since the opening of the present century Curaçao has had a considerable share in this prosperity. Its port became once again one of the busiest in the Western Hemisphere, and its huge oil refineries made it a center of bustling activity. Little, however, occurred with regard to its relations to other countries, until the Kingdom in Europe was invaded by the Germans. In Curaçao all necessary measures were taken at once. Enemy subjects were interned in the isle of Bonaire, east of Curaçao; a state of siege was proclaimed, and some British troops were landed in order to assist the Dutch garrison in protecting the oil refineries, so essential to the successful continuation of warfare. After the United States had entered the war, eighteen months later, the British troops were replaced by American forces, with whom a perfect and most friendly cooperation has also been established in the cause of the defense of these islands which, owing to their exposed situation, and the highly desirable targets, which the refineries of Aruba and Curaçao present to the enemy, have already been the scenes of a few submarine attacks. We will not, in this article, divulge any contemporary history, however important it may be; we may, however, conclude by stating that the few enemy attempts made against these islands have proved the efficacy of their defenses and the perfect watchfulness of their Dutch and American defenders.



# ISLAND EMPORIUM

by DR. H. J. VAN BOVEN

Head of the Department of Social and Economic Affairs

AS is fitting for an island territory. Curaçao's destiny has always been tied to the sea. In the days of sailing ships, the islands of St. Eustatius and Curaçao were warehouses of a hemisphere: when sail gave way to steam—and fixed shipping routes—Curaçao's prosperity remained unimpaired, for it supplied the oil that furnished the steam. But though the oil is produced in ever greater quantities, and the demand for it ever increases, today Curaçao's prosperity is endangered. For the waters of the world are troubled and the ships on which that prosperity has always been based do not call in the numbers of yesteryear.

Remarkably enough, Curaçao owes its chief source of wealth, which has now exposed the island to the covetous regard of the aggressor, not to any richness of its own but to an accident of nature. The fact is that while neighboring Venezuela's wealth in petroleum is tremendous, it is not so fortunate in its geography. Its coast provides no shelters for the establishment of a large port. So Venezuela's oil is transported to Curaçao and Aruba, there refined and dumped into the tankers of the world. This new road to a stable economy was opened for Curaçao in 1916 when the Curaçaosche Petroleum Industrie Maatschappij, a Dutch concern, affiliated to the Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij, one of the subsidiaries of the Royal Dutch, built its refinery there. A few years later, Standard Oil Company of New Jersey established a refinery on Aruba for a subsidiary, Lago Oil and Transport Co. The Mexican Eagle Co., a subsidiary of Royal Shell, likewise opened a plant on Aruba.

These enterprises have also helped keep alive the Leeward Islands. For there is a constant demand for labor, and the plants have provided employment for every able-bodied man in the Territory who cared to accept it. And the money and merchandise, sent by the refinery workers to their relatives on St. Martin, St. Eustatius and Saba, have alleviated to a great extent the economic problems of the people of those islands.

The benefits of the oil trade, established by the Curaçaosche Petroleum Maatschappij, can be readily seen in Willemstad, capital of the island of Curaçao, as well as of the Territory. Paved streets bear the traffic of a surprising number of automobiles. Homes are lit by electricity, have running water and electric refrigerators, and radios are commonplace in even the smallest of homes. The business section is an eldorado for shoppers and was, until the war ended the tourist trade, the shopping center of the entire Caribbean region. Here one could find all the merchandise commonly sold in Europe, Asia and America—all at moderate prices as a result of Willemstad's being a free port. It may, therefore, be said that Curaçao's modern prosperity



ST. ANNA BAY HARBOR, WILLEMSTAD

*Photo Philip D. Gendreau, New York*

is largely derived from the great oil-enterprise, established in 1917.

The same high living standards prevail in Enmastad, the oil town of Curaçao, as well as in Oranjestad, the capital of Aruba and San Nicolas, its oil town. In remote districts, it is true, many loam huts with straw-thatched roofs are found, but in general the islands of Curaçao and Aruba provide better living than is found elsewhere in the Caribbean.

This is due to the wage scale in the oil industry—the highest in the West Indies. Wages are higher on Aruba, however, than on Curaçao. This high pay has been largely offset by the increased cost of living brought about by the war. All necessities, to say nothing of luxuries, must be imported and goods formerly plentiful have become scarce, with consequent rise in their costs. Indicative are clothing which jumped more than 50 percent in cost in a year, food



which rose about 15 percent, household articles up 20 percent. In sum, the over-all cost of living in one year rose by over 13 percent.

The Government has given much thought to the possibility of establishing wage and price ceilings. But though the former has already been done on a moderate scale, and could be carried further, the latter presents a problem which at a glance seems insuperable. Curaçao imports everything and, quite naturally, its government and merchants have no control whatsoever over prices set in foreign lands. The Government is, however, continuing its study of the problem.

The rise in the cost of living is also due in great measure to an increasing scarcity. Again the war and shipping are responsible. It was impossible to build stock-piles of any great moment in most commodities, because the tropical climate causes such rapid deterioration.

Some idea of how critical the import problem is, may be gained from the following figures which show the florin-value of Curaçao's imports from the United States in 1941:

Maize flour	381,579
Wheat flour	530,125
Meat	643,817
Canned products	769,173
Beer	518,223
Milk	828,769
Women's clothing	1,184,985
Men's clothing	630,500
Furniture	382,179

One other import must be mentioned, the problem created by the scarcity of which are only too familiar to Americans. It is automobile tires. Perhaps tires are even more essential in the islands than in the United States. For there are no railroads or trolley lines in the Territory. Distances, it is true, are small when compared with those of a larger land, but they are still too great to be negotiated afoot. Good roads abound and heretofore all travel has been by automobile. Unfortunately, too, the cars can not be supplanted by horse-drawn vehicles because the islands can not raise fodder. Neither can it be imported in view of the lack of shipping space. So the people of Curaçao share Americans' interest in the development of synthetic rubber. Meanwhile petrol has been strictly rationed, not because there is any shortage of this commodity, but in order to economize on tires by restriction of traffic.

Inter-island travel has also undergone a change inasmuch as passenger ships are nearly nonexistent. The Royal Netherlands Airlines has for many years been operating in the West Indies and today, in addition to linking Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao, it has expanded service to many of the other West Indies islands, as well as to North and South America. New schedules have brought Willemstad within half an hour of Oranjestad.

As stated previously, there is always a demand for workers in the refineries, and this has brought a decline in many

industries which once contributed to the Territory's importance. Today, exports to the United States consist primarily of petroleum, figures on which quite naturally cannot be given. Two other products of the Territory which find ready market in the United States are aloë-resin, valuable in the preparation of laxatives, and phosphoric acid chalk. Export value of the former in 1941 was 634,383 florins, and of the latter 902,288 florins.

Agriculture suffers a languishing existence as a result of the scanty rainfall, as well as of the trek to industry. Rainfall on the Leeward Islands is more ample than in countries situated in colder zones, although moderate for the tropics; on the Windward Islands, precipitation is slightly less. But against this stands great evaporation, irregular rainfalls, and the fact that a hard rain merely rushes down the rocky slopes uselessly to the sea. Some preventive work, by the construction of dikes, has been undertaken.

The Government is well aware of the big difficulties pertaining to the agrarian problem and has authorized special studies. Experts have laid out experimental gardens and are endeavoring to instruct the farming population—whose methods often are primitive—in scientific agriculture. Model farm communities have also been set up with the purpose of enabling a part of the population, at least, to be independent of imported food-stuffs. The first villages set up along this line may be considered to have proved quite successful.

The fisheries of the Territory, while not without some importance, by no means occupy the place this industry commonly assumes in island economy. Here again, the higher wages of industry are partially responsible, but other causes are the lack of capital to equip modern fishing vessels with cold-storage space.

The salt industry, however, has undergone a rejuvenation. Salt once was one of the Territory's greatest exports, but the trade lost out to Europe and other producers. But the war has produced a mild boom, with Bonaire as the principal beneficiary. The salt is gathered entirely by natural means. Sea water is channeled into tiles and the water evaporated by the sun. The salt is then scooped out by hand. It is too rough for use on the table and finds its chief value in the salting of meat and fish. Experiments are now being conducted toward producing a grade suitable for the household.

The phosphate industry centers on the eastern part of the island of Curaçao and gives work to some 400 to 500 men. The entire export goes to England.

There is some gold in the soil of Aruba. Attempts in former years to take it out in commercial quantities did not attain much success, but it is not beyond the realm of possibility that modern methods might be profitable.

The economic significance of the Leeward Islands is naught, although Saba is known for the production of fine laces.





*Royal Netherlands Steamship Co.*

# THE HUB OF THE CARIBBEAN

by DR. E. ELIAS, Head of the Government Press Service

VISITORS to Curaçao have admitted that Willemstad, the capital city of that small island and of the whole group of Dutch West Indian Isles, has been the surprise of their life. None of them had expected to find such "fullness of life" on so small an island, visible on most maps as only a tiny dot off the coast of Venezuela.

Nowhere else, perhaps, has a population of some 50 or 60 thousands succeeded in making so much of itself and of the city and district which it inhabits. After a hard day's work, Curaçaoenaars—as they are called—like to spend an hour or so on the terrace of the famous Hotel Americano, just opposite the still more famous pontoon bridge, and to contemplate the bustling activity on the broad channel, which cuts deep into the island, providing it with one of the finest and safest natural harbors of the Western Hemisphere. It is a glorious sight indeed. On the other shore the quay is bordered by a row of picturesque gabled houses, painted pale yellow, red and blue—perhaps a little more "Dutch" than old Dutch houses in Holland really are; perhaps just a little bit too reminiscent of musical comedy Holland, but fascinating nevertheless and, under the bright tropical sky, full of charm and color. To the right the palatial Government House, the official residence of the Governor, forms part of the somewhat grim "Fort Amsterdam," whose outer walls are castigated by the mighty breakers of the flaming-blue Caribbean.

Half the time the huge pontoon bridge, which connects the two main sections of the town, is opened, and in spite of the resulting inconvenience the people of Curaçao are only too glad to make the often rough crossing in harbor-boats, for they know that an opened bridge means traffic and work and prosperity and final victory. Day by day, almost hour by hour, the large oil-tankers, carrying the raw material from Venezuela to the refineries, and the refined

oil from the refineries to the arsenals of the United Nations, sail up and down the Channel, often in mighty convoys. Not only oil tankers enter and leave the Channel; there are food-carrying freighters (for Curaçao produces hardly any of its own food), dozens of schooners, beautiful and romantic with their lofty and elegant sails, and warships from time to time. The thronged quaysides are covered with all sorts of merchandise. Feverish activity reigns in the numerous storehouses. Vans and trucks move along in endless streams, blocking the passage to the innumerable private cars, of which there are 3,000 or more in this little island.

It is a colorful scene; through the dense crowds of children of the many races which have settled on the Caribbean shores, move, in ever increasing numbers, the whiteclad sailors and marines—Dutch and American—and, in tropical khaki, the soldiers of both nations. For nowhere in this part of the world do the Americans more closely cooperate with their allies; nor could this cooperation anywhere be friendlier than in Curaçao, where the powerful, glittering car of Admiral Robinson, U.S.N. Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces in the Territory, has become quite a familiar sight. Admiral Robinson is popular with the general public as well as with the troops, and the same may be said of his Dutch comrade in arms, Commander van Asbeck who, as head of the Dutch and Curaçao troops, is his closest collaborator.

If, from the point of view of trade and traffic, Curaçao is the hub of the Caribbean, it is at the same time one of its most vital strategical points, largely as a consequence of its importance to industrial warfare. When the Dutch Minister for the Navy, Admiral Furstner, visited this island last year, he said: "Curaçao is of vital importance for keeping intact the communications across the Caribbean; it is highly important for defensive as well as offensive operations; it is



important because of its huge oil refineries, but . . . its situation is most exposed and vulnerable." And the late General Hugh Johnson wrote in one of his last columns that Curaçao and Aruba are "sore thumbs" which emerge from the blue waters of the Caribbean.

However this may be, Dutch-American cooperation has been fully equal to the task of safeguarding the islands' security against lurking enemy submarines, and even though the seas around the islands have been the scene of repeated enemy action, the great fleets of tankers and merchantmen, which safely reach their destination, testify to the thoroughness of the Allied system of defense and to the unabating watchfulness of the guardians of those vital waters.

Although the war has affected in various ways the life of the island, and demanded many of those sacrifices which all United Nations, big or small, have to make on behalf of the cause of final victory, Willemstad still is, what it had been in time of peace, the great shopping center of the Caribbean. This is another fact which will surprise every visitor who comes to these parts with fixed ideas about little isolated islands where native shops just provide the sheer necessities of daily life. The gay and crowded business streets pride themselves on some of the finest stores in the whole Caribbean region. They are well stocked, and even today there is a thriving luxury trade in Peruvian and other South American trinkets, Chinese shawls, first class furniture, artistic souvenirs and clothes which bear witness of the Curaçaoenaars' desire not to pass as backwoodsmen.

Cafés and restaurants are numerous in various parts of the town, and crowded during meal times. The cooking is cosmopolitan and excellent; one or two Chinese restaurants will give satisfaction to the most fastidious tastes. Life is not dull in this little island, and a good thing too for the hard-worked community, who feel that industry should be stimulated by the enjoyment of the amenities of civilized society. People live well in Curaçao; Willemstad proper is surrounded by health suburbs and garden cities, where many houses, in large semi-tropical gardens, are built in the grand style.

The picturesque bays all over the island, and especially in proximity of the town, where the much frequented Piscadery Bay is a most delightful resort, offers excellent sea-bathing; there is, moreover, plenty of opportunity to practice all sorts of games and sports. The choral cliffs, which surround the capital, and which reach a height of hundreds of feet, are the rambler's paradise; they are easy to negotiate, yet have some of the attractions of undiluted wilderness and the romance of a solitude, which is seldom interrupted except by the bleating of goats.

Excellent roads lead all around the coast to clear bays and small villages and imposing homesteads, some of which date from the eighteenth century. Before the war many Americans discovered the beauties and attractions of Curaçao; after this war they are sure to rediscover them, and if the praise of Curaçao is not sung, it will not be the fault of the Americans, civilians, sailors and soldiers, who are here to do their bit for the common cause, and who have made numerous Dutch and Curaçao friends among all classes of the population.

In the days of peace to come they will not forget this small but vigorous island which has so wholeheartedly befriended them; nor will Curaçao forget them.



THE FAMOUS  
PONTON  
BRIDGE  
AT WILLEMSTAD

WILLEMSTAD'S  
BUSY  
SHOPPING  
CENTER



TOURIST  
CENTER  
OF THE  
CARIBBEAN







OIL REFINERIES AT CURAÇAO



OIL STORAGE OF THE C.P.I.M.

# BLACK GOLD

The Oil Industries of Aruba and Curaçao

by I. WAGENMAKER, Commissioner of Aruba

**F**IFTEEN years ago Aruba was one of the little known spots on the globe: utterly quiet and forgotten to the outside world, until the petroleum industry came like the prince in the fable to awaken the sleeping beauty. Then lifting cranes rattled, swinging into place machinery and metals of every form and weight; hammers boomed; and in a surprisingly short time there arose a forest of chimneys, factories, buildings and offices. Thus the American Standard Oil Company and the Mexican Eagle Company made their entry into Aruba—the former on the eastern part of the island, and the latter to the West.

New facilities were added in the years that followed, especially by the Lago Oil and Transport Company, the Standard Oil firm, which today has on Aruba possibly the largest refinery in the world. Since 1929, tankers of every nationality have borne the name of this little strip of Netherlands territory to the furthestmost reaches of the world. The former Netherlands Minister of Colonies, Charles Welter, stated in 1941 that Great Britain obtained 70 percent of her oil requirements from two little islands in the Caribbean, Curaçao and Aruba. There is no oil obtained from Aruba itself; all of the oil comes from Venezuela. Before the advent of the petroleum industry, the people of Aruba had been farmers, exporting little if anything, living solely off

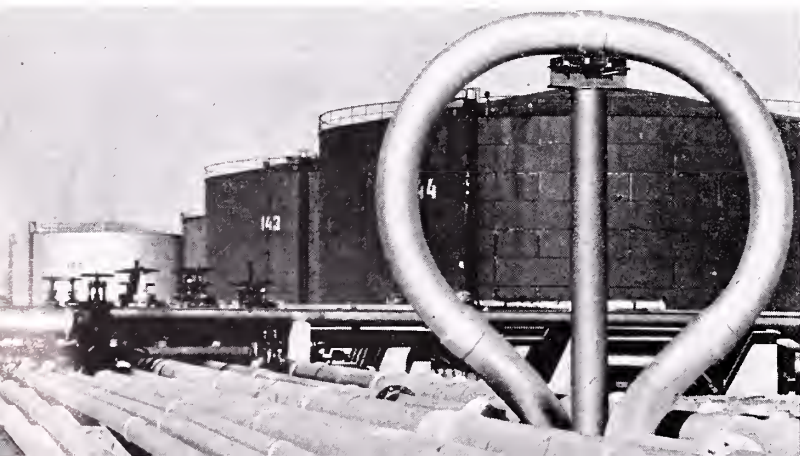
what they raised. Practically overnight, the Aruban's whole vista of life changed. A mode of life he had never even dreamed of before was opened to him.

The oil companies brought their own technicians, of course, but recruited the majority of employees from among the islanders, and trained them. On his part the Aruban responded. By nature a good worker, he soon fitted himself to the new life, and progressed quickly. Today, many Arubans hold key positions in the refineries, drawing commensurate pay.

Despite the fact that by and large the islanders are all employed in the oil industry, the companies have been careful to keep alive the attachment to the soil that they found in the natives. It has been a policy to grant the workers leave to sow their crops. That is paying dividends today with the war curtailment of shipping and the falling off of food imports.

Some extent of the operations of the Lago Company may be grasped from the fact that in 1940 its pay roll numbered 4,692. With the spread of the war and the demand for greater petroleum production, this figure has sharply increased. Both Lago and Mexican Eagle, which formerly employed 370 persons, have had to go beyond the confines of the islands to obtain the necessary workers. The result

OIL LINES WITH EXPANSION LOOP



EXECUTIVE OFFICES OF THE STANDARD OIL CO., ARUBA





is that Aruba, the one-time "backwoods" of the Caribbean sea lanes, has become one of the most cosmopolitan communities in the world, representatives of 44 different nations living and working within its borders.

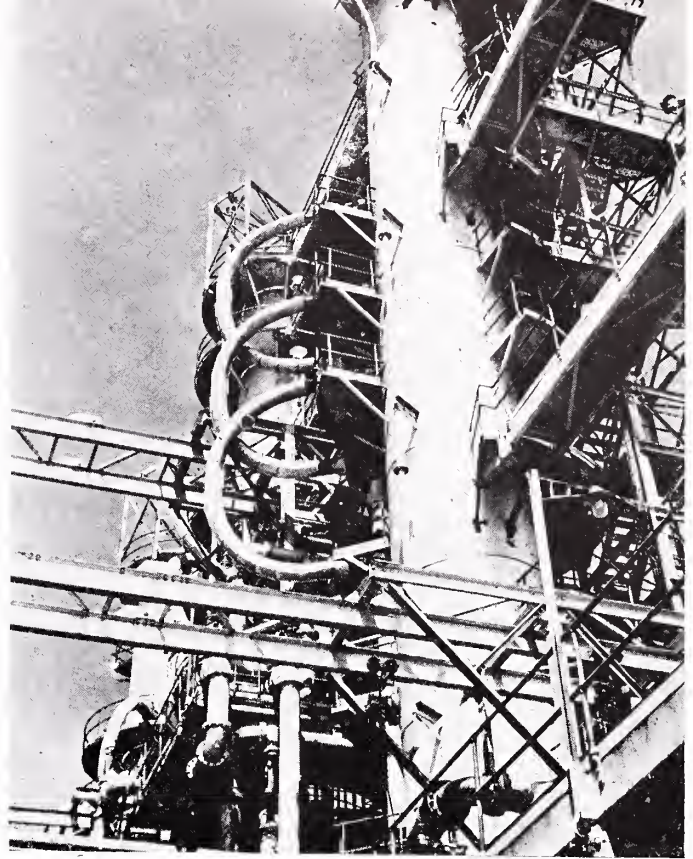
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The oil industry of the island of Curaçao is older than that of Aruba, though perhaps not so large—consisting of only one refinery to Aruba's two. It was in 1915 that the Curaçaosche Petroleum Industrie Maatschappij, an offshoot of the Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij, which is a subsidiary of the Royal Dutch, began construction of its plant. Production was modest until 1923, when a gigantic expansion, which is still to be completed, was begun. In 1929 peak employment of more than 10,000 was reached, with a subsequent decline due to the installation of labor-saving machinery. Present plans for the refinery call for more than 800 storage tanks, varying in size from a capacity of 1,000 barrels up to 140,000 barrels.

The oil is brought from Venezuela to both Aruba and Curaçao in small, shallow-draught tankers. The Curaçao company alone utilizes 32 of these ships, which make the round trip in from two and one-half to three days. The majority of the executives and technicians of the Curaçao refinery are Europeans, while the rank-and-file, as on Aruba, are islanders. Whereas the Curaçao refinery from the first had the advantage of the fine port of Willemstad, the refineries on Aruba were put to the expense and effort of establishing and equipping a port suitable for ocean-going tankers. Here 12 of these huge vessels can be loaded simultaneously, and constant experiments are continually increasing the rapidity of the loading. For some products, 15,000 to 16,000 barrels per hour is no longer exceptional.

Insofar as possible, the aim has been to make the refinery self-sufficient. It has its own private power and water supplies, great workshops and drydocks, factories for the making of cans and barrels for the packing of oil products.

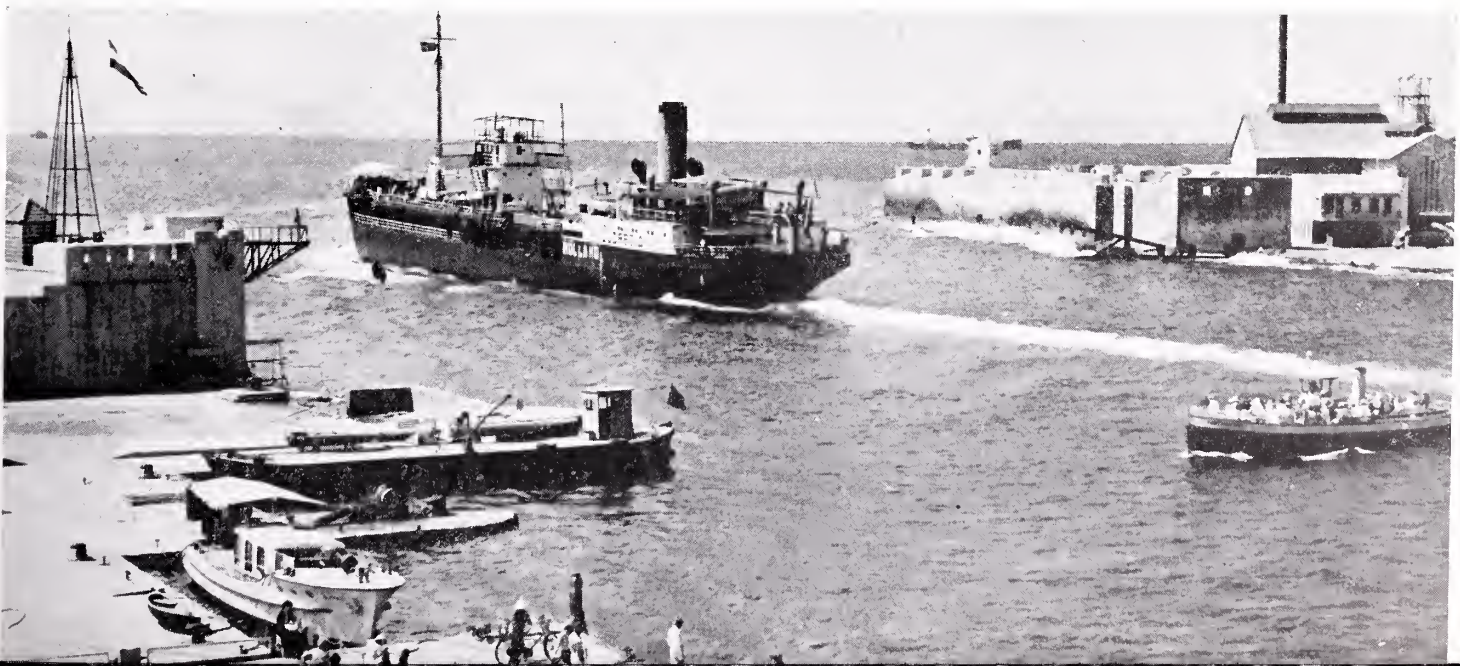
The company has given as much attention to the welfare of its workers as to technological improvements. Houses are provided for employees with families and some good schools for their children, while unmarried Europeans find



CRACKING INSTALLATIONS

a home in the Company's well-appointed hotel. The amenities of life, which stimulate arduous work, are by no means lacking in this island community; a club building with restaurant is at the disposal of the employees; tennis courts, football and hockey fields and other sports facilities are likewise provided, and the dances, theatrical and musical performances of the oil employees have become regular and much valued features in the Island's social life. Thus, working for the Lago does not mean leading the life of an exile in a far-away island, but rather a sort of partnership in a strong and self-contained community. The advantages of this wise policy are reflected in the Company's results which are of such essential importance to the United Nations' war effort.

DUTCH OIL TANKERS LEAVING WILLEMSTAD







MOUNTAIN ROAD ON SABA

# CURAÇAO'S FIVE SISTERS

by THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION BUREAU

**D**UE to the fact that the entire group of Dutch islands in the Caribbean is officially known as the Territory of Curaçao, the five sister islands are rather apt to be forgotten by the outside world as so many anonymous Cinderellas. Thanks to its importance as an oil center, Aruba has, of recent years, emerged from this long obscurity. But the other sisters, if less endowed with material charms, also possess interesting qualities which merit at least a passing glance.

To begin with, the immediate neighbor of Curaçao, the island of Bonaire, is notable for its rustic charm undisturbed by modern industry and marred only by the presence, since this war, of the enemy subjects formerly residing in all parts of the territory of Curaçao and now safely put away in this peaceful island. The native population pays little attention to these unwelcome guests, however, and continues its modest and frugal life in an island, which does not abound in natural resources. Bonaire is far from being a fertile island. Like the other Dutch islands in the Caribbean, it is a coral island, founded on a volcanic base.

One of the great natural attractions is the graceful pink flamingo which peoples the numerous salt lagoons in large colonies. The north of the island is hilly and rather rugged; the south is flat. Here the coastline has roughly the shape of a semi-circle, forming an extensive bay, in which the tiny island of Little Bonaire is situated, just opposite the small capital of Kralendijk (coral dike), sheltering it from the winds and the beating of the waves.

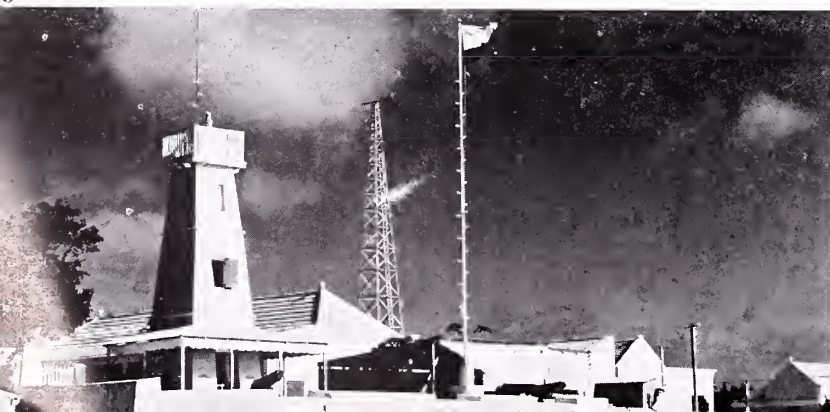
Kralendijk has a population of 2,000, on a total of 5,500 for the island as a whole. W. J. van Balen, who in 1938 wrote a very instructive book on the Territory of Curaçao, published by the local Chamber of Commerce, calls it a

"charming garden village," whose neat little toy-houses, painted yellow and pink, and with red tiled roofs, are picturesquely framed in more verdure than one would have expected to see on these somewhat barren shores. The little capital is usually called Playa by the inhabitants, which means "beach."

It is a long way from the three Dutch Caribbean Islands to the three Dutch Windward Islands. One has to cross some 600 miles of Caribbean waters in northeasterly direction, as a rule against the stiff trade wind. The small Dutch group is situated between the American and British Virgin Islands, some French islands and another British group, including St. Kitts, Nevis and Anguilla. It really consists of two and a half islands, the northern half of St. Maarten belonging to the French. The Dutch portion of St. Maarten, however, is somewhat larger and more important than the other two Dutch islands, Saba and St. Eustatius. It harbors about half the population of the group. On a population of 2,400 there are 1,500 women, many of the men seeking occupation elsewhere—a common occurrence in all the islands of the Lesser Antilles.

The scenery of St. Maarten which, like the other Leeward Islands, is less arid than those off the Venezuelan coast, is far from unattractive. Broad crowned tamarinds and turpentine trees cast a welcome shadow on the streets of the quiet little capital, Philipsburg, which is usually called Great Bay by its Negro population. The town extends along a narrow sandy spit of land, between the open bay and a lagoon; on both sides it is flanked by hills. It has a population of a little under one thousand, and consists of a few long main streets, crossed by narrow alleys, and bordered by small wooden houses. The names of the streets and

OLD FORTRESS AT BONAIRE



GOVERNMENT'S OFFICES AT ST. MAARTEN





COAST OF ST. EUSTATIUS



ST. NICOLAAS, OIL TOWN OF ARUBA



alleys are Dutch, but English is the vernacular, even in the schools. The same applies to the French part of the island. The chief attraction of St. Maarten is perhaps its beautiful tropical and sub-tropical fruit trees and its luxurious flowers. The whole island is, after all, not without considerable natural charm and the lover of simple and healthy life may spend some very enjoyable days there.

From St. Maarten to Saba is a sea trip of some three hours. Geologically, and perhaps in a few other respects, this tiny island is the most remarkable one of the whole Dutch West Indian group, although it hardly has any economic importance. At first sight it looks inaccessible, and moreover, practically uninhabited. As a matter of fact, the little capital is hidden on the bottom of what may be termed a crater, and that is probably how it obtained its quaint name of "The Bottom." The town is reached by means of a narrow, winding road which, in the shape of an endless succession of broad, irregular steps, penetrates through the reddish rock into the interior of the mountain. It is a well-kept and well-shaded place; some of its old-fashioned country houses bear witness of times of greater prosperity. The Bottom is mainly inhabited by the black population; Windwardside some 200 meters higher up the hill, is a snug little garden town, where the white men of the island have pitched their tents, and finally there is Hellgate, officially called Zion Hill, which, at an altitude of 500 meters, hangs against the mountain side. The white and the black populations in this island (the former mainly of Dutch and English descent) keep strictly apart from each other, and neither of them has wholly escaped from the consequences of segregation, inbreeding having given some cause for anxiety to the local authorities. In spite of this, the men of Saba enjoy an excellent reputation as sturdy sailors. A "somewhat archaic English"—as Mr. Van Balen calls it—is the common language of the population, which numbers 1250, of whom only 465 are men. Few of the inhabitants talk or understand any Dutch, although it is nominally taught in the schools.

The little island is far from being self-sustaining. Vegetables and fruits are grown in small quantities only; stock-breeding is somewhat better developed, and some cattle, and also poultry, is exported to Curaçao. Saba, however, has to import food in the shape of cheap tins, as well as clothing and other necessities.

But, the real "forgotten lady" of the Dutch West Indian Islands is St. Eustatius, two hours' sailing from Saba. Seen from the sea, it presents itself as a large rock, with an irregularly flattened summit. It was called the "Golden Rock" in its short hour of prosperity, which coincided with the American War of Independence, when the little island carried on a thriving trade in all sorts of merchandise, but especially arms and contraband. At times hundreds of ships were lying simultaneously in the roads. In a separate contribution the story is told of how St. Eustatius was, at that time, the first to render homage to the flag of the American "rebels." This remarkable incident marked the end of St. Eustatius's prosperity.

Oranjestad today is the capital of an arid island of 1,200 inhabitants, as compared to the 25,000 who found an existence there over a hundred and fifty years ago. At that time, the town consisted of an Upper and a Lower settlement, the latter being situated on the waterfront, and being the seat of commerce and trade. This lower town has gradually subsided; of the former warehouses only the foundations remain; partly these foundations are visible through the water; partly, they just emerge. In more recent times, the sheer wall of rock, 50 meters high, on which the upper Town with its residential quarters, government offices and churches had been built, has equally started to give way, its debris covering the beach and many houses being in danger of collapse. Thus the town makes an impression of utter decay. Its streets are unpaved; the little wooden houses are devoid of all comfort. The little island is passing through very hard times; agricultural possibilities are scanty. The barren interior is covered with desert bushes. The only farm in the island, which has not lost all importance, is situated halfway up the slope of the "Quill," a crater mountain, a green tropical wood in whose interior is the only spot in the island which is not piteously dried up. "Quill" is an English corruption of the Dutch "kuil" or "pit," the name given by the original settlers to the crater. It is in sad contrast to the Golden Rock of bygone days. Happily, however, this unlucky island forms part of a group of islands which owing to the feverish activities of Curaçao and Aruba, may be said to be in a flourishing condition as a whole; good opportunities are, therefore, offered to its inhabitants in the more prosperous parts of the Territory.

*Photo Royal Dutch Airlines*





# MISSIONARY WORK IN CURAÇAO

by THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION BUREAU

**I**N contrast to Surinam, where large groups of the population belong to various Christian and non-Christian religious communities, ninety percent of Curaçao's permanent population confess to the Catholic faith. In the last few years, a considerable floating population has been added to the islands of Curaçao and Aruba, in connection with the great extension of the oil refineries, and the war effort generally, and among these temporary inhabitants of the Territory the number of non-Catholics is very considerable. Normally, however, no more than ten percent of the people, including some 580 Jews, belonged to non-Catholic denominations.

On the islands of Curaçao and Aruba the various Protestant Sects have been amalgamated into a "United Protestant Community," with a membership of 5,400 on the main island, and 530 on Aruba. Only on the small Windward Islands can the Protestants claim a majority over the Catholics, the Wesleyan Methodist Church being well represented on St. Maarten and even having the majority on St. Eustatius, while on the island of Saba, Catholics and Anglicans are equally divided.

Curaçao is an Apostolic Vicariate, administered by the Dominican Fathers. The head of the Vicariate has the rank of a bishop, and is normally assisted by 50 priests, and by White Friars and nuns, who devote themselves to education, the nursing of the sick and other social and charitable works. 36 out of 52 elementary and secondary schools are in the hands of the Mission, which moreover has some technical schools and courses under its management, including a school for wickerwork—a famous Curaçao industry. Catholic infirmaries rank among the best and most modern



MONSIGNOR VERRIET, APOSTOLIC VICAR OF CURAÇAO

in the Territory. The Mission has opened three sailors' Homes, one in Aruba and two in Curaçao; a fourth sailors' Home, established by the Salvation Army, has an excellent reputation among the sailors of the Caribbean.

Among the most remarkable achievements of the Mission in the sphere of social improvement are its wonderful labor-camps, huge plantations where unemployed youths are taught various trades; these camps are virtually self-contained, the inmates providing for all their needs themselves.

One of the two full-sized daily papers, which are issued in Curaçao, is the property of the Mission; one of the smaller papers, printed in Papiamentu, is also published under the responsibility of the Mission. The Church strongly encourages the use of Papiamentu. Sermons are frequently held in the vernacular while, on the other hand the Mission is by no means inclined to allow its pupils to neglect the Dutch language.

Contrary to Surinam, where political divisions on denominational lines are unknown, the Catholics of Curaçao are organized as a political party, which holds ten out of fifteen seats in the Legislative body. Most of the members of the Governor's Privy Council and heads of Departments, however, are non-Catholics; in practical politics, therefore, a fair middle course is kept. The Protestants take an active and useful part in public life according to their more restricted means, while the Jews, mostly of Portuguese origin, are a highly esteemed section of the population. The oldest Jewish families have been established in these islands since the earliest days of colonization, and form a perhaps somewhat exclusive aristocracy, which is remarkable for its romantic traditions.

Although educationally the Mission plays an extremely important part in Curaçao, the whole system of education is supervised by the Government, and carried out in accordance with Government regulations, approved by the Legislative Assembly. For higher education, however, students had to be sent to Holland, until the Mother Country was cut off owing to its occupation by the enemy. A long cherished project was then put into effect by the Curaçao Government; a secondary school, the Peter Stuyvesant College (called after the last Governor of New Amsterdam, who three hundred years ago was a Director of Curaçao) was opened, its curriculum preparing pupils fully for admission to the Dutch Universities.

OLD PROTESTANT CHURCH AT WILLEMSTAD





# “ESPERANTO”

## OF THE CARIBBEAN

LIKE Surinam, the other Dutch Territory in the Western Hemisphere, Curaçao has a language all its own. In Surinam it is “talkee talkee” and in Curaçao it is “Papiamento.” Etymologically, the language of Curaçao is . . . well, there’s an argument about that.

One of the earliest students of the odd tongue was a Father Schabel who characterized it as a “broken kind of Spanish.” Later, another scholar termed it “Negro-Spanish.” An encyclopedia states it derives from “the African language.” Still another authority speaks of its having been adapted from “Negro-Portuguese.” And the Curaçao Chamber of Commerce describes it as a mixture of Dutch, Spanish, English, French, Portuguese and South American Indian!

Like the fabled three blind men of Hindustan, all of the above definitions may be considered “partly in the right, but all were in the wrong.” True, Papiamento is just about 90 per cent derived from Spanish. But the remaining 10 per cent is almost wholly Dutch, with a small number of derivatives of the other languages mentioned.

It has been called a dialect, but Papiamento certainly is anything but that. It’s a sort of Esperanto of the Islands, the universal language throughout the Territory, the only tongue everyone, regardless of race or nationality, understands. This is true even though there are three different varieties of Papiamento—three different dialects of a language that has been called a dialect! There is the Papiamento

of the Dutch, and the Papiamento of the Leeward Islands. But though the Jews use more Spanish and Portuguese words, and the Dutch naturally favor a brand in which their native language predominates, the variations are not so great that there is any difficulty in the one understanding the other.

As in the case with the language of Surinam, it is believed possible that Papiamento had its origin among the slaves brought to Curaçao early in its history by Portuguese traders. A student of the language once expressed this theory in very poetical form! “The Portuguese seed,” he wrote, “falls on African soil and a tree grows out of this seed (a kind of pidgin-negro-portuguese) which all the slaves who are transported on Portuguese ships, are obliged to adopt. The European languages spoken in their new homeland (Spanish, French, English and Dutch) are then grafted on the old tree and sprout forth in new roots while the essence of the language retains its Yucan character in pronunciation and grammar.” And this may explain why the pronunciation so often reminds one of that language, especially in the nasal sound which is given to final “n”, and in the “si”—sound, which is of Portuguese origin.

We must, of course, not forget that, like other languages, both Spanish and Portuguese have undergone some changes in the course of two and a half centuries, and that it is, therefore, very likely that originally there were fewer divergencies between them and Papiamento than there are in modern times.

NATIVE MEMBER OF THE CURAÇAO MOUNTED POLICE

*Photo Robert Matthews, of the Holland-America Line*



NATIVE CHILD AT ZEGOE, NEAR WILLEMSTAD





# CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION BUREAU

OF Curaçao the same may be said as of Surinam, namely that it is in a state of constitutional transition. In the framework of the Kingdom of the Netherlands both Territories occupy the same position, which is clearly indicated in the first clause of the Dutch Constitution which defines the Kingdom of the Netherlands as consisting of the "Territory in Europe" and the Territories beyond the seas.

This definition, which entails the most advanced development from the initial purely colonial stage to a status of equal partnership, needs of course the moulding of practical application, and the gradual adaptation of the population to the higher claims of full citizenship, in order to rise from a constitutional formula to living reality.

In this respect Curaçao has been in a somewhat more favorable position than Surinam, the Territory being less isolated from the main roads of traffic and the channels of world development, while at the same time it has been in a more flourishing economic condition. Moreover the fact that up to 1941 Surinam needed financial support from the Motherland in order to balance its budget, rather hampered autonomous development. A development which is all the more desirable in view of the schemes of constitutional reform, announced by the Queen personally, and which aim at full autonomy of each of the Overseas Territories in the framework of the Kingdom.

In this connection it is interesting to note that, fundamentally, constitutional relations within the Kingdom are somewhat different from those in the British Empire, although ethically the same aims may be aspired at. Dr. M. F. da Costa Gomez, who represents Curaçao in the Special Advisory Council, set up by the Netherlands Government in London, may be considered an expert in these matters, and to this Curaçao lawyer we are indebted for some most enlightening remarks. The position of the four component parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (that is Holland in Europe, the Netherlands East Indies, Surinam or Netherlands Guiana, and Curaçao or the Netherlands West Indies) has not been sharply defined by various amendments to the Constitution, but it is clear that its first clause, alluded to above, lays down an all-important principle. It is the principle of the unity, the indivisibility of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, by which is not meant the Territory in Europe—what is generally called Holland—or any of the Overseas lands, but all these Territories together.

This may be considered as the codification of the most enlightened principles in colonial policy, by which the colonial idea itself is swept aside. What used to be colonies, have developed into integral parts of the Kingdom. They no longer "belong to" Holland, any more than Holland "belongs" to them. They are parts of the Kingdom, inalienable parts which cannot, like mere colonies, be ceded or sold or



THE SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

put into any exceptional position outside the constitutional fabric, without the Kingdom as a whole being violated.

"Curaçao," said Dr. da Costa Gomez, "is not a separate dominion (staatsdeel); it is the Netherlands in the tropics, waiting for Dutch initiative in favor of closer organic co-operation, in order to extend and broaden our unique community of nations."

Dr. Gomez rightly uses the word "unique," not as a boast, but as a plain statement of fact. We need not ask whether the system, laid down in the amendments to the Constitution of 1922 and 1938 is, in itself, a superior one. But it certainly is a unique one, as no other nation has unified the various parts of its territory in different parts of the world in the same degree. And it certainly is a system which renders possible the much ampler development into a community of equal nations, envisaged by the recent announcements by the Queen and Her Government. At the same time this unification, which has constitutionally forged all the countries under the Netherlands Crown into one single Kingdom (as distinct from Empire) should by no means be identified with centralization. The contrary is nearer the truth. At first sight the position may seem somewhat complex, especially with regard to the status of the inhabitants of the various Territories. Dr. Gomez states that according to the Netherlands Citizenship Act of 1892 "Curaçao nationals are Netherlands in the full sense of the word."—"This act," he writes, "endows the Curaçao Netherlands with the same rights of citizenship as the inhabitants of the Territory in Europe; the Curaçao people being included in the national Netherlands community."

From this, however, results—according to the authority we have been quoting—that the Curaçao people have no separate constitutional existence as a national unit: "It is beyond all doubt that, owing to unbreakable territorial bonds, and identity of nationality, constitutional organs and legislation, the Netherlands in Europe and Curaçao form a constitutional unity within the Kingdom." The same applies, of course, to Surinam. While the organic development of this constitutional community is as yet far from completed, the great schemes, recently announced, clearly indicate the Government's desire to achieve this completion without more delay than present world conditions make unavoidable, and to create at the earliest possible moment a unified Netherlands community, whose four parts will be autonomous, yet linked together by the strongest bonds, each being truly and fully part and parcel of the one Kingdom of the Netherlands, yet none of them being complete without the other ones.



# THE FIRST SALUTE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

by THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION BUREAU

NOVEMBER 16, 1776, was a momentous day in the history of America and a little Dutch island in the Caribbean. It was on that day that an American brig, the *Andrew Doria*, hove to in the sheltered bay of a tiny island in the West Indies, called St. Eustatius. There was nothing remarkable about an American ship dropping anchor there because St. Eustatius was a wealthy island which acted as entrepreneur in the brisk trade being carried on between Holland and the struggling young Federation. Nevertheless, the occasion was marked for history because the *Andrew Doria* was the first ship to bring the brand-new flag of America, the Stars and Stripes, into a foreign harbor.

It was that bright red, white and blue banner, with its 13 stars and stripes, streaming in the breeze, which troubled the mind of Abraham Ravene, Commander of the wind-swept, rock Fort, as he stood watching the brig approach the shore. But if it troubled Ravene, there was no doubt in the mind of the Island's handsome young Governor, Mynheer Johannes de Graef. He ordered that the salute be fired from the cannons of his island. Moreover, according to the historical account, he received the captain, Isaiah Robinson, "most graciously."

Strangely enough, the story of this event in the history of both Republics, the United States and the United Netherlands, lay buried deep in archives until 1872, and it was the portrait of a be-wigged and fine looking Dutch chevalier, hanging in the State Capitol in Concord, New Hampshire, that brought it to light.

Young Benjamin F. Prescott had just been appointed Secretary of that State and one day, shortly after his ap-

pointment, he became curious about the portrait. He had heard that the subject of the picture was actually the first foreign magistrate to salute the American flag. The story, however, had a legendary air about it and Prescott was not satisfied.

He searched through the archives and, eventually, came upon a letter from the donor of the painting. The letter, dated 1837, merely said that the salute had been given and added that it had been fired at the command of the gentleman in the portrait, Johannes de Graef, Governor of the Dutch Island of St. Eustatius in the previous century.

Now that legend had become actual fact, Prescott became more and more curious. He sat down and wrote to the United States Minister in the Hague, Mr. James Birney, asking for further information and ere long received the following reply:

"In an old book, 'Nederlandsche Jaerboecken', or Dutch Annals, containing contemporary accounts of remarkable histories that occurred in the United Provinces or in the countries of the States General, there is a full and minute account given, in correspondence and depositions, of the historical fact about which you make inquiry.

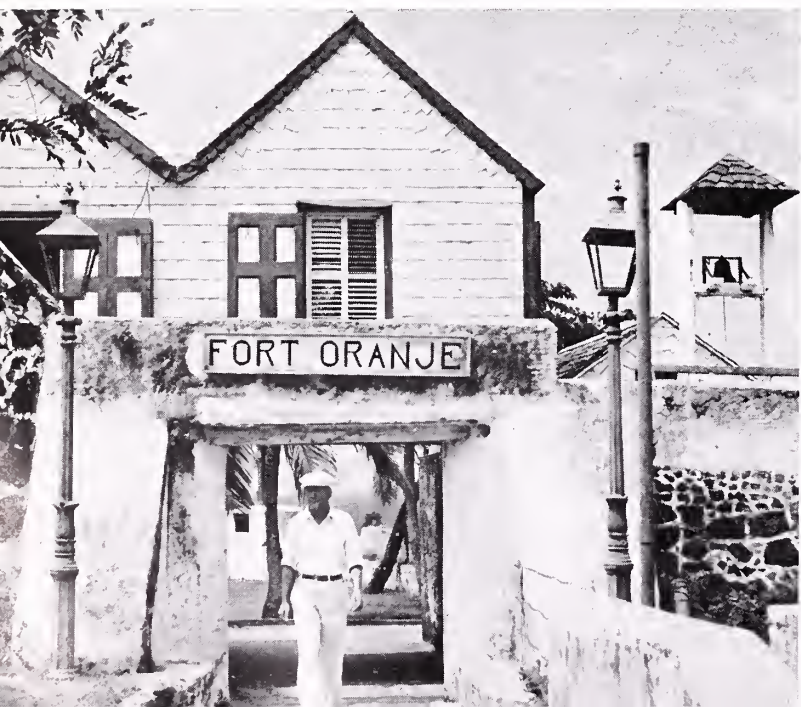
"It shows clearly that, on the 16th of November, 1776, Johannes de Graef, Governor of the Dutch Island of St. Eustatius, of the West Indies, did, after due consideration, fire a regular salute to the new flag of 13 stripes of the American colonies.

"This, of course, sets aside the opinion of Commodore Preble, founded upon the diary of Surgeon Green, that the salute fired on the 14th of February, 1778, was the first salute given the American flag."

The United States Minister was not only prompt, he was also thorough, for he followed up his letter with extensive quotes from Dutch sources, which revealed that the historic event was not an isolated event. Indeed, it led to an exchange of sharp diplomatic notes between the British Government and the States General of the Republic of the United Netherlands.

The first written letter of protest came from one Christopher Greathead, Governor of the British Isle of St. Christopher (now known as St. Kitts), which was only 12 miles away from St. Eustatius. Greathead, who desired to report the affair to his Government in London, sent the letter to de Graef by his "representative," a certain Mr. Stanley, who was told to "investigate the case."

But the Dutch Governor of the prosperous little Dutch





island did not possess a firm mouth and strong chin for nothing. He gave short shrift to Mr. Stanley, whom he even refused to see, merely penning the following lines concerning the salute:

"... Regarding the reception given by the forts of this Island, under my commandment, I flatter myself that, if my masters exact it, I shall be able to give such an account as will be satisfactory."

Apologizing politely for not having received Stanley, de Graef concludes:

"I have preferred to give Your Honour my answer only in writing rather than entering upon any examination with Mr. Stanley (without wishing to detract from the respect due to that gentleman) of the important contents of Your Honour's letter, or of my conduct at all events. I will not at present say more of the propriety of this step, which seems to bear the appearance of exacting an account of my actions in my own Government, which no one in the world is entitled to do except my Gentlemen and Masters."

Johannes de Graef, himself, suffered no consequences from the incident. He was subsequently recalled, but his Government backed his decision and later on he returned to St. Eustatius.

At the time of Johannes de Graef's Governorship, St. Eustatius was a thriving West Indian island.



Much armament was exported from Holland to St. Eustatius, which, in turn, smuggled it into the Confederacy. A visitor on the island in 1776 and 1779 reported that no less than 3,162 ships sailed from St. Eustatius during his 13 months' stay. Another report said that in 1779 vessels brought 12,000 hogsheads of tobacco and 500,000 ounces of indigo from North America. They went home laden with military supplies "made in Holland."

This continuous flow of war goods to the young Republic eventually became too great for England to tolerate and, in December, 1780, she declared war on the Republic of the United Netherlands. Though at the moment we can hardly imagine all this controversy between the now strongly allied nations, at that time

it spelled the end for "The Golden Rock." Early the following year, February 3, 1781, the British Admiral, Rodney, conquered St. Eustatius.

It may be appropriate at the end of this little story to quote a paragraph from a letter written by John Adams in acknowledging the early recognition (first after France) of the United States by the Government of Holland:

"Your Republic, I am persuaded, will have no cause to repent of the part she has taken in favor of America—and may the friendship, correspondence and alliance between the two Nations be perpetual."





# CURAO BASTION OF T



BRENN GUN  
CARRIER  
ON CURAÇAO



LEFT:  
JAVANESE  
SAILORS  
ARRIVING  
IN CURAÇAO



RIGHT:  
DUTCH  
MARINES  
MANNING  
COASTAL  
BATTERY



NETHERLANDS  
MOTOR  
TORPEDO  
BOAT IN  
CARIBBEAN  
WATERS



# CAO THE CARIBBEAN

DUTCH  
SCOUT CAR  
ON ARUBA



LEFT:  
AMERICAN  
SOLDIERS  
GUARDING  
THE OIL  
REFINERIES



RIGHT:  
JAVANESE  
SAILOR  
OF THE  
ROYAL  
NETHERLANDS  
NAVY  
STATIONED  
IN CURAÇAO



CAMOUFLAGED  
GUN BATTERY  
ON CURAÇAO









# UNITY IN DIVERSITY

by DR. M. DE NIET

Attorney General of Surinam

Ex-President of the Committee "Curaçao-Surinam"

*In October, 1941, Governor G. J. J. Wouters of Curaçao formed a representative Committee, to which he assigned the task of studying the problems, connected with closer cooperation between the two Netherlands Territories on the Western Hemisphere, Surinam and Curaçao. A few months afterwards a similar Committee was established at Paramaribo, the capital of Netherlands Guiana, and in May, 1942, discussions took place in which practical possibilities of closer cooperation were reviewed. Dr. P. A. Kasteel, who succeeded Mr. Wouters as Governor of Curaçao in July, 1942, at once gave proof of his interest in the Committee's work.*

*In the following article Dr. M. De Niet, Attorney General of Surinam, and President of the Committee "Curaçao-Surinam," deals with some aspects of Dutch West Indian co-operation.*

THERE was a time, over a century ago, when Surinam and Curaçao formed politically a single unit, under the administration of a common Governor General. Both territories were, at that time, far less important than they are now; yet it was admitted that it was an anomaly to deal with two colonies, separated by so many hundreds of miles, and vastly different in almost every respect, as if they were one single territory.

Both countries have attained an importance, not dreamed of in the past, but, like a hundred years ago, each has its own ethnological, geographical, cultural and social characteristics, while their economic interests lie extremely far apart. But far stronger than ever before are the moral bonds which unite the two territories, and far stronger the wish to give expression to their feelings of unity and solidarity. This is, to a large extent, a consequence of the participation of the Netherlands in the world struggle, which has everywhere strengthened national consciousness and, on the other hand, of the isolated position in which Surinam and Curaçao found themselves when the Motherland fell into the enemy's hands. They felt then that, as children of one same martyred mother, they had to show strength and confidence, and that they had to stick closely together in order to redouble their strength in the great battle for freedom.

When the Netherlands East Indies had to yield to the overwhelming forces of another enemy, Surinam and Curaçao, the only free Netherlands Territories in a world of terrific battle, felt that it was their honorable task not only

to contribute their utmost to the war effort of the United Nations, but also to act as guardians of the age-old Dutch traditions, ideals and civilization. They felt that they had a great task to perform, and that they would only be able to perform it if they held together and acted together, in spite of the long distance which separated them from each other.

Curaçao being economically the stronger-developed of the two Territories and therefore having a much greater demand for labor, many hundreds of Surinamers are living on the main island as well as on Aruba; the majority of these Surinamers are engaged in the huge oil distilleries, but they have found their way into many trades and occupations, and some of them are highly valued as Government officials in Curaçao. Although this exchange is rather one-sided, Surinam not yet being much in need of industrial labor, it makes for closer relations between both populations. Surinamers are a highly esteemed element in the population of Curaçao. While taking part in many activities in public and social life, they are closely united in an Association of their own, which is called "Justitia, Pietas, Fides," after the device in their country's escutcheon. This Association, while holding together the Surinamers in Curaçao and Aruba, and doing much to smooth their path, at the same time, through its very existence as well as through many of its activities, promotes closer intercourse between members of both communities.

Even before the East Indies had been temporarily lost, something had been done in order to bring Curaçao and Surinam closer together. Both countries regularly exchanged broadcasts, in which, so to say, they discussed current events, and compared notes on important topics. An economic mission from Surinam visited Curaçao, and there was much intercourse between the two Territories, especially in the economic field. Although regular shipping communications had to be stopped some time after the United States entered the war, the Royal Dutch Airlines (Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij) maintained an ever increasing passenger traffic.

In October 1941 the former Governor of Curaçao, Mr. Wouters, formed a Committee, including representatives of all spheres of economic, intellectual, cultural, official and political life, in order to study the question of closer cooperation between Surinam and Curaçao; a few months afterwards this action found response in Surinam, where an analogous Committee was founded. On this occasion the leading officials of the Curaçao Committee visited Surinam last spring, on the invitation of the Governor, and discussions were held on the many problems affecting both Territories.



Curacao being an infertile country, and almost wholly dependent on imports for most of its foodstuffs, it was hoped that Surinam, as an agricultural country, would be able to provide for some of the needs of its partner in the Dutch community in the Western Hemisphere. On the other hand Curacao, having considerably more capital at its back and, under present conditions, not always finding the means to make it pay, might interest itself financially in Surinam's agriculture, for instance by financing its mechanization, which would enable Surinam to increase its production and thus to provide the better for the demands of both Territories. The realization of such schemes, sound as they are, meets with many difficulties under present-day conditions, but they have been thoroughly explored on both sides, and it may be expected that some foundation for solid economic cooperation will be laid within not too long a time.

The activities of both Committees are, however, by no means restricted to the economic sphere. Although their work is as yet chiefly in the preparatory stage, it is certain to result in closer cooperation by means of exchange of visits, common celebrations, mutual broadcasts, interchanges between the religious communities, and, in a general sense, by common action where, formerly, each acted on its own.

It should be kept in mind that, whereas the common interests of the two Territories concerned are directly involved in this development, it has by no means an exclusive character, but aims, on the contrary, at the promotion of Dutch unity and solidarity all over the world. It is hoped that when the Kingdom of the Netherlands is restored, Surinam

and Curacao will have set a practical example of co-operation between these two parts of the Kingdom, which may serve as a model for co-ordination of the efforts of all its component parts. It is, moreover, realized, that Surinam and Curacao, small as they are, compared to the East Indies and the Netherlands in Europe, will lend a special flavor to the Commonwealth of Dutch nations after the war, owing to its situation in this part of the globe, as members of the Western Hemispheric community. They may form a link between the New World, whose part in world affairs and in the organization and maintenance of peace and order may become larger than ever before, and the Netherlands in Europe which, apart from France, is the only continental European country which is territorially represented in this hemisphere. For these, if not for other reasons, the Netherlands West Indies may well enjoy a special prestige in a restored Kingdom of the Netherlands, and in order to be worthy of this prestige and hold it up to the benefit of the Dutch community of nations as a whole, the two small Dutch Territories shall have to strengthen themselves, morally and materially, by close cooperation.

This cooperation, this unity, at which they aspire, does not mean any loss of individuality. The two territories are and remain different. Politically and constitutionally they are separate bodies, under the Netherlands Crown, no Siamese Twins. This separateness, far from being blurred by future developments, will be emphasized by the great constitutional reforms which have been announced as a definite step to set the parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on a footing of equal partnership.













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